ESSAYS AND SKETCHES BY
DOUGLAS JERROLD

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"The two flasks were in brief time emptied."

The Essays of DOUGLAS JERROLD

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by his Grandson
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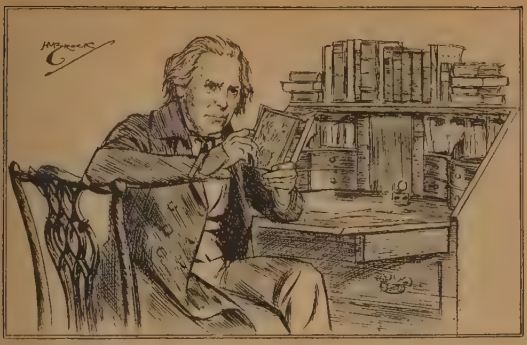


CONTENTS

	PAGE
Shakespeare at Charlecote Park	1
Shakespeare at "Bank-side"	7
The Epitaph of Sir Hugh Evans	13
Bully Bottom's Babes	22
Shakespeare in China	28
Solomon's Ape	39
The Castle Builders of Padua	46
The Tapestry Weaver of Beauvais	50
The Wine Cellar: A "Morality"	58
Recollections of Guy Fawkes	67
Elizabeth and Victoria	75
The Little Great and the Great Little	90
The Manager's Pig	95
Some Account of a Stage Devil	103
Fireside Saints	121
Cat-and-Fiddle Moralities: The Tale of a Tiger	127
A Gossip at Reculvers	140
The Two Windows	150

PAGE

THE ORDER OF POVERTY 154
THE OLD MAN AT THE GATE 166
THE FOLLY OF THE SWORD 171
THE GREENWICH PENSIONER 181
THE DRILL SERGEANT 189
THE HANDBOOK OF SWINDLING 199

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

"The two flasks were in brief time emptied" (The Wine Cellar) . . . . *Photogravure Frontispiece*

PAGE

Headpiece to Contents v

Tailpiece to Contents vi

Headpiece to List of Illustrations vii

Headpiece to Shakespeare at Charlecote Park . . 1

Tailpiece to Shakespeare at Charlecote Park . . 6

Headpiece to Shakespeare at "Bank-Side" . . . 7

Tailpiece to Shakespeare at "Bank-Side" . . . 12

Headpiece to The Epitaph of Sir Hugh Evans . . 13

"One who would have added weight and dignity to the ceremony" 17

Headpiece to Bully Bottom's Babes 22

Tailpiece to Bully Bottom's Babes 27

Headpiece to Shakespeare in China 28

PAGE

"Became wise by poring on his book" 34

Tailpiece to Shakespeare in China 38

Headpiece to Solomon's Ape 39

"Cast him down a ripe pomegranate" 43

Tailpiece to Solomon's Ape 45

Headpiece to The Castle Builders of Padua 46

Headpiece to The Tapestry Weaver of Beauvais . . . 50

Tailpiece to The Tapestry Weaver of Beauvais . . 57

Headpiece to The Wine Cellar: A "Morality" . . . 58

Tailpiece to The Wine Cellar: A "Morality" . . . 66

Headpiece to Recollections of Guy Fawkes 67

"Rejoicing in the captivity of a suit of clothes stuffed with hay" 70

Tailpiece to Recollections of Guy Fawkes 74

Headpiece to Elizabeth and Victoria 75

"Rank . . . preached its high prerogative from externals" 80

"Hangman's surgery" 83

Headpiece to The Little Great and the Great Little . . 90

Tailpiece to The Little Great and the Great Little . . 94

Headpiece to The Manager's Pig 95

Tailpiece to The Manager's Pig 102

Headpiece to Some Account of a Stage Devil . . . 103

"Would solace the child by playing upon a diabolic fiddle" 113

Tailpiece to Some Account of a Stage Devil 120

Headpiece to Fireside Saints 121

Tailpiece to Fireside Saints 126

Headpiece to Cat-and-Fiddle Moralities: The Tale of a Tiger 127

"Almost for two whole days did the tiger sleep" . . 135

PAGE

Tailpiece to Cat-and-Fiddle Moralities: The Tale of a Tiger 139

Headpiece to A Gossip at Reculvers 140

"Sugar from even the sweeter lips of lady mistress" . 143

Tailpiece to A Gossip at Reculvers 149

Headpiece to The Two Windows 150

Headpiece to The Order of Poverty 154

"He has dreamed away his life upon a hillside" . . 164

Tailpiece to The Order of Poverty 165

Headpiece to The Old Man at the Gate . . . 166

Headpiece to The Folly of the Sword . . 171

"Hodge, poor fellow, enlists" 175

Tailpiece to The Folly of the Sword 180

Headpiece to The Greenwich Pensioner . . . 181

Tailpiece to The Greenwich Pensioner . . . 188

Headpiece to The Drill Sergeant 189

"He is, indeed, unbent" 195

Headpiece to The Handbook of Swindling . . . 199

"Politely receives his destroyer" 233

"Any one of these names may be . . . confidently given in to the night constable" 246

"Other worthies laboured on horseback" . . . 256

INTRODUCTION

Much of Douglas Jerrold's writing took essay form although he only applied the title to five short pieces which were added as *Essays* to *The Chronicles of Clovernook* in 1846. Those five pieces are included in this volume along with others from his collected works, and from among those scattered contributions to periodicals which have been brought together at various times since his death.

Born in London on January 3rd, 1803, Douglas William Jerrold was the youngest son of a theatrical manager then of the Kent circuit. His baby years were passed at Cranbrook, his childhood at Sheerness, and then, not having quite attained the mature age of eleven, he was entered as a first-class volunteer on board the *Namur*, guardship at the Nore, on December 22, 1813. Here in the ship's school his education was continued, and here the midshipman was allowed privileges dear to the boyish heart; he was permitted to keep pigeons, and not the least of his privileges was the being permitted the use of the captain's collection of books—that captain, it is pleasant to recall, being a brother of Jane Austen. About fifteen months after joining the *Namur* he was transferred to the brig *Ernest*, engaged in convoying transports and in bringing home wounded soldiers from the Continent. Then came Waterloo and Peace. In October 1815 the *Ernest* was paid off and the boy-officer returned to civil life. At the end of the year the Jerrold family left Sheerness for London, and Douglas made a new start as printer's apprentice, and perseveringly pursued a rigorous plan of self-education. Then he began writing verses and plays,

and when he was eighteen his first piece was represented on the stage. Play-writing and slight journalism were combined with the compositor's work for a few years before, throwing aside the composing stick, he relied entirely on the pen. Numerous plays—of many of which nothing beyond the names is now recoverable—were written before Douglas Jerrold made his "hit" with *Black-eyed Susan* in 1829. Thenceforward he was a busy playwright and a constant contributor to the magazines, annuals and newspapers. In 1841 the advent of *Punch* introduced him to a medium peculiarly suited to his genius, and to that periodical he contributed his most popular work, *Mrs Caudle's Curtain Lectures*, and one of his best novels, *The Story of a Feather*. To the *Illuminated Magazine* (1843-4) and *Douglas Jerrold's Shilling Magazine* (1845-8), both of which he edited, he contributed many characteristic essays and stories, but later he devoted himself more particularly to political writing as editor of *Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper* (1846-8), and of *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* (1852-7). He died on June 8th, 1857.

We have heard much within recent years for and against fiction "with a purpose," as though this was some new literary manifestation. Among the best remembered writers of the early Victorian era are just those who had a purpose other than that of merely amusing their readers—Thackeray and Dickens are of course the two most striking examples. The author's purpose is often the salt not only flavouring his work for immediate contemporaries, but also preserving it for future readers. That with Douglas Jerrold this purpose counted for much we have his own words to show. Prefacing one of his serial ventures he said: "It will be our chief object to make every essay—however brief, and however light and familiar in its treatment—breathe *with a purpose*. Experience assures us that, especially at the present day, it is *by a defined purpose alone*,

whether significant in twenty pages or in twenty lines, that the sympathies of the world are to be engaged, and its support insured." That this conviction was at the back of the greater part of Douglas Jerrold's writings no student of his work can fail to recognise. The fact is perhaps answerable for much of his work having enjoyed but a temporary popularity, for there are two ways of writing "with a purpose"—the first the topical or journalistic way, and the second the general or more philosophical. Yet if Douglas Jerrold expended himself to a considerable extent over the particular, he by no means neglected the general, of which there is abundant testimony in this volume, as well as in *St Giles and St James*, *The Story of a Feather*, *Punch's Letters*, and that little book of golden philosophy, *The Chronicles of Clovernook*.

The essays collected into this volume are, as has been hinted, from various sources; the earliest dates from the late 'twenties, the latest from the last year of the author's life. No attempt has been made to place them chronologically. It has seemed well to keep the five Shakespearean essays together, representing as they do a life-long interest of their author's. In the early 'thirties Douglas Jerrold and a number of other young Shakespeare enthusiasts—William Godwin the Younger, Laman Blanchard, Kenny Meadows, etc. — formed the Mulberry Club, at the gatherings of which essays and verses were read by the members; some certainly of the following papers formed part of the club's "Mulberry Leaves," as also did the same writer's song on *Shakespeare's Crab Tree*, a song which may be quoted here, as it is not widely known, to complete Jerrold's "leaves."

> To Shakespeare's mighty line
> Let's drink with heart and soul;
> 'Twill give a zest divine,
> Though humble be the bowl.

Then drink while I essay,
  In slipshod, careless rhyme,
A legendary lay
  Of Willy's golden time.

One balmy summer's night,
  As Stratford yeomen tell,
One Will, the royst'ring wight,
  Beneath a crab tree fell;
And, sunk in deep repose,
  The tipsy time beguiled,
Till Dan Apollo rose
  Upon his greatest child.

Since then all people vowed
  The tree had wondrous power:
With sense, with speech endowed,
  'Twould prattle by the hour;
Though scattered far about,
  Its remnants still would blab:
Mind, ere this fact you doubt,—
  It was a female crab.

"I felt," thus spoke the tree,
  "As down the poet lay,
A touch, a thrill, a glee,
  Ne'er felt before that day.
Along my verdant blood
  A quick'ning sense did shoot,
Expanding every bud,
  And rip'ning all my fruit.

"What sounds did move the air,
  Around me and above!
The yell of mad despair,
  The burning sigh of love!
Ambition, guilt-possessed,
  Suspicion on the rack,
The ringing laugh and jest,
  Begot by sherris-sack!

"Since then, my branches full
Of Shakespeare's vital heat,
My fruit, once crude and dull
Became as honey sweet;
And when, o'er plain and hill,
Each tree was leafless seen,
My boughs did flourish still
In everlasting green."

And thus our moral food
Doth Shakespeare leaven still,
Enriching all the good
And less'ning all the ill;—
Thus, by his bounty shed
Like balm from angel's wing,
Though winter scathe our head,
Our spirits dance with spring.

With reference to the first of the following essays there recently came into my hands an interesting letter from the author, which may well be quoted here. Walter Savage Landor's *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare* had been published in 1834, and apparently Jerrold's correspondent had pointed out the similarity of theme:—

"11 Thistle Grove, Little Chelsea,
"*August 6th* (1835).

"My dear Sir,—*The Trial of Shakespeare* was, I think, published by Bentley. I have only read extracts from it in reviews; and though therein I recognised *nothing similar to my little sketch*, nevertheless the publication of the book does, on consideration, seem to preoccupy the subject. I concluded that you had seen something of the volume, or should before have pointed it out to you. If you please—for I confess myself somewhat thin-skinned under any charge of plagiary, the more especially when unmerited—you may omit the first legend.

"For the second, it has never yet seen the light; nor am

I aware of the existence of any essay to which even the uncharitableness of criticism might imagine a resemblance.

"It struck me, on reading it, that were it broken up more into paragraphs—as new objects are introduced—it would be more effective. As it is the images crowding so closely upon each other—(whilst the spirit of the essay depends upon the distinctness with which they represent the several plays)—may confuse, and thus fail to satisfy the reader. If you think with me, and will again favour me with the proof, I will make the alterations with as little trouble as possible to the printer. There being now only one legend, I should call the paper *Shakespeare at Bankside*.—I am, my dear Sir, yours truly,

"Douglas Jerrold."

"W. H. Harrison, Esq."

Beyond the fact that they both deal with the tradition of Shakespeare's deer-stealing escapade and departure from Stratford-on-Avon, there is but little similarity between Douglas Jerrold's brief essay and Landor's much longer work. With reference to *Shakespeare in China* it may be of interest to point out—the author in satirising his fellow countryman later used the fiction of describing English characters from the Chinese point of view in *Punch* of May 25th, 1844.

If the first few essays testify to the author's loving homage to Shakespeare, others in no uncertain voice proclaim his political radicalism, his detestation of war, and his sense of the truth that man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn. In *Recollections of Guy Fawkes* the references to the Isle of Sheppy "some five and twenty years ago" are reminiscences of Jerrold's boyhood at Sheerness. The pleasant little homily on human consistency, *The Manager's Pig*, is said to have been founded in fact; the manager in question being Davidge of the

Coburg Theatre, to whom Jerrold was for a time "household author" at a weekly salary. The series of *Cat-and-Fiddle Moralities* so auspiciously begun with *The Tale of a Tiger* was not pursued any further. *The Drill Sergeant* and *The Greenwich Pensioner* formed part of a series of *Full Lengths*, contributed to the *Monthly Magazine* in 1826-7; there were at least six of them, but as I have not been able to consult a complete set of the magazine, I have only been able to trace three—the two given and one on *The Ship Clergyman*.

In the closing item of this collection we have a satiric essay of a sort, which seems to have been in the air at the time; it was published originally in 1839 with illustrations by Phiz, at the same time that Thackeray by contributing his *Catherine* to *Fraser's* was also seeking to discredit "the Newgate school" of fiction. Later, in *Punch*, Douglas Jerrold reverted to the "Newgate novel-mongers," mentioning them as still a power, and showing that satire had not stopped the demand for their productions; and in one of the most popular of his comedies a character is made to say, "When I was young, girls used to read *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Jeremy Taylor*, and such books of innocence; now, young ladies know the ways of Newgate as well as the turnkeys. Then, books gave girls hearty, healthy food; now, silly things, like larks in cages, they live upon hemp-seed."

W. J.

SHAKESPEARE AT CHARLECOTE PARK

It was a fine May morning when the bailiff of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, attended by some half-dozen serving men, rode quickly through the streets of Stratford, and halted at the abode of his worship the Mayor. The children in the street stood mute, and stared; gossips ran to door and casement; Thrums, the tailor, mechanically twitched off his cap, and for a moment forgot the new bridal jerkin of Martin Lapworth, the turner, of Henley Street; John-a-Combe, the thrifty money-scrivener, startled from a sum of arithmetic, watched the horsemen with peering eyes and open mouth; and every face expressed astonishment and surmise as the horses' hoofs tore up the road, and the arms of the riders rang and clattered; and their visages, burly and glowing, showed as of men bearing mighty tidings. Had a thunderbolt fallen in the market-place, it could not more suddenly have broken the tranquillity of Stratford than had the sudden visit of Sir Thomas Lucy's retainers. Every one pressed to the Mayor's house

to learn the tidings, and in a brief time one, taking up the fears of his neighbour for the truth, told an inquiring third that the swarthy Spaniard, with a thousand ships, had entered the Thames; that her gracious highness the Queen was a close prisoner in the Tower, and that the damnable papists had carried the host through the city, and had performed High Mass in the Abbey of Westminster. This rumour was opposed by another, averring that the Queen had drunk poison in a quart of sherris (a beverage much loved by her highness)—whilst a fourth story told of her private marriage with the Master of the Horse. Great wonderment followed on each tale. Some vowed they would never be brought to speak Spanish, others religiously called for fire upon all Catholics—whilst more than one good housewife hoped that in all reasonable time her Majesty would bring forth a prince. Stratford was the very court-place for rumour; old, yellow Avon paused in his course, astonished at the hum and buzz that came with every wind.

At length the truth became manifest. No Spanish bottom poisoned the Thames; no Spanish flag blasted the air of England. Elizabeth yet gripped her sceptre—yet indulged in undrugged sack and cold virginity. Still it was no mean event that could thrust seven of Sir Thomas Lucy's men into their saddles, and send them galloping, like so many St Georges, to the Mayor of Stratford. Thus it was then; the park of Sir Thomas had been entered on the over-night, and one fine head of fallow deer stolen from the pasturage, whilst another was found sorely maimed, sobbing out its life among the underwood. The marauders were known, and Sir Thomas had sent to his worship to apprehend the evil-doers, and despatch them under a safe guard to the hall of Charlecote. This simple story mightily disappointed the worthy denizens of Stratford, and, for the most part, sent them back to their various business. Many,

however, lingered about his worship's dwelling to catch a view of the culprits—for they were soon in custody—and many a head was thrust from the windows to look at the offenders, as, mounted on horseback, and well guarded on all sides by Sir Thomas Lucy's servants and the constables of Stratford, they took their way through the town, and, crossing the Avon, turned on the left to Charlecote.

There were four criminals, and all in the first flush of manhood; they rode as gaily among their guards as though each carried a hawk upon his fist and were ambling to the sound of Milan bells. One of the culprits was specially distinguished from his companions, more by the perfect beauty of his face than by the laughing unconcern that shone in it. He seemed about twenty-two years of age, of somewhat more than ordinary stature, his limbs combining gracefulness of form with manly strength. He sat upon his saddle as though he grew there. His countenance was of extraordinary sweetness. He had an eye, at once so brilliant and so deep, so various in its expression, so keenly piercing, yet so meltingly soft—an eye so wonderful and instant in its power as though it could read the whole world at a glance—such an eye as hardly ever shone within the face of man; it was not an eye of flesh—it was a living soul. His nose and chin were shaped as with a chisel from the fairest marble; his mouth looked instinct with thought, yet as sweet and gentle in its expression as is an infant's when it dreams and smiles. And as he doffed his hat to a fair head that looked mournfully at him from an upper casement, his broad forehead bared out from his dark curls in surpassing power and amplitude. It seemed a tablet writ with a new world.

The townspeople gazed at the young man, and some of them said, "Poor Will Shakespeare!" Others said, "'Twas a sore thing to get a child for the gallows!" and one old crone lifted up her lean hands and cried, "God help poor

Anne Hathaway, she had better married the tailor!" Some prophesied a world of trouble for the young man's parents; many railed him as a scapegrace given to loose companions, a mischievous varlet, a midnight roysterer; but the greater number only cried, "Poor Will Shakespeare!" It was but a short ride to the hall, yet ere the escort had arrived there Sir Thomas Lucy with some choice guests were seated at dinner.

Hereupon the constables were ordered to take especial care of the culprits, who were forthwith consigned to the darkest and strongest cellar at Charlecote. Here, at least, it was thought that Will Shakespeare would abate somewhat of his unseemly hardihood, for all the way to the mansion he had laughed and jested and made riddles on the constables' beards, and sang snatches of profane songs, and kissed his fingers to the damsels on the road, and, indeed, "showed himself," as a discreet, observing nun declared, "little better than a child of Satan." In the cellar he and his co-mates, it was thought, would mend their manners. "As they do not learn to respect God, and worship Sir Thomas, and honour deer's flesh, as good Christians ought —and they learn not these things in the dark—'tis to waste God's gifts upon 'em to let 'em see the light of day." Thus spoke Ralph Elder, constable of Stratford, to one of the grooms of Charlecote. "I tell you, John," continued the functionary, "Will Shakespeare's horse didn't stumble for nothing at the field of hemp. God saves poor babes born to be hanged, for 'tis no constable's affair—— Hush! mercy on us, they laugh—laugh like lords!"

To the shame of the prisoners be it spoken, the discourse of Ralph was broken by a loud shout from the cellar. To add to the abomination, the captives trolled forth in full concert a song—"a scornful thing," as Ralph afterwards declared it, "against the might and authority of Sir Thomas Lucy." The men, the maids—all flocked to the cellar door,

while the dungeon of the prisoners rang with their shouting voices. "It was thus they glorified," as Ralph avowed, "in their past iniquities" :—

"'Twas yester morning, as I walked adown by Charlecote Meads,
And counting o'er my wicked sins, as friars count their beads;
I halted just beside a deer—a deer with speaking face,
That seem'd to say, 'In God's name come and take me from this place!'

"And then it 'gan to tell its tale—and said its babe forlorn
Had butcher'd been for Lucy's dish soon after it was born;
'I know 'tis right!' exclaimed the dam, 'my child should form a feast,
But what I most complain of is, that beast should dine off beast!'

"And still the creature mourn'd its fate, and how it came to pass
That Lucy here a scarecrow is, in London town an ass![1]
And ended still its sad complaints with offers of its life,
And twenty hundred times exclaimed, 'Oh! haven't you a knife?'

"There's brawny limbs in Stratford town, there's hearts without a fear,
There's tender souls who really have compassion on a deer;
And last night was without a moon, a night of nights to give
Fit dying consolation to a deer that may not live.

"The dappled brute lay on the grass, a knife was in its side;
Another from its yearning throat let forth its vital tide.
It said, as tho' escaping from the worst that could befall,
'Now, thank my stars, I shall not smoke on board at Charlecote Hall!'

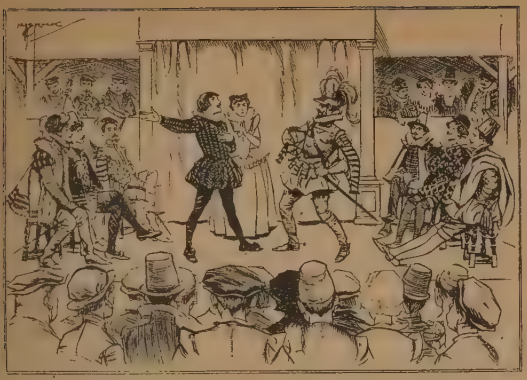
"Oh, happy deer! Above your friends exalted high by fate,
You're not condemned like all the herds to Lucy's glutton plate;
But every morsel of your flesh, from shoulder to the haunch,
Tho' bred and killed in Charlecote Park, hath lined an honest paunch."

The household were truly scandalised at this bravado.

[1] "In the country a scarecrow, in London an ass!"—*Shakespeare's Satire on Sir Thomas Lucy.*

The night came on, and still the prisoners sang and laughed. In the morning Sir Thomas took his chair of state, and ordered the culprits to his presence. The servants hurried to the cellar—but the birds were flown. How they effected their escape remaineth to this day a mystery, though it cannot be disguised that heavy suspicion fell upon four of the maids. The story went that Shakespeare was a day or two afterwards passed on the London road.

This tale was corroborated by John-a-Combes. For, many years afterwards, a townsman of Stratford, who had quitted his native place for the Indies just at the time that Warwickshire rang with the deeds of the deer-stealers, returned home, and amongst other gossip was heard to ask the thrifty money-getter what became of that rare spark, Will Shakespeare, him who entered Sir Thomas's park at Charlecote. "Marry, sir," replied John; "the worst has become of him, for after that robbery he went to London, where he turned stage actor, and writ plays, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and such things."



SHAKESPEARE AT "BANK-SIDE"[1]

The bell of St Mary Overy had struck three; the flag was just displayed from the Rose play-house; and, rustling in the wind, was like, in the words of the pious Philip Stubbes, "unto a false harlot, flaunting the unwary onward to destruction and to death." Barges and boats, filled with the flower of the court-end and the city, crowded to the bridge. Gallants, in the pride of new cloak and doublet, leaped to the shore, making rich the strand with many a fair gentlewoman lifted all tenderly from the craft; horses pranced along Bank-side, spurred by their riders to the door of the tiring-room; nay, there was no man, woman, or child who did not seem beckoned by the Rose flag to the play,—whose ears did not drink in the music of the trumpets, as though it was the most ravishing sound of the earth. At length the trumpets ceased, and the play began.

[1] According to Rowe's story, related to Pope, Shakespeare's first employment in London was to wait at the door of the play-house and hold the horses of those that had no servants, that they might be ready after the performance. "But I cannot," says Mr Steevens, "dismiss this anecdote without observing, that it seems to want every mark of probability."

The Rose was crammed. In the penny gallery was many an apprentice unlawfully dispensing his master's time—it might be, his master's penny too. Many a husband, slunk from a shrew's pipe and hands, was there, to list and shake the head at the player's tale of wedded love. Nor here and there was wanting, peeping from a nook, with cap pulled over the brow, and ruff huddled about the neck, the sly, happy face of one, who yesterday gave an assenting groan to the charitable wonder of a godly neighbour—of one who marvelled that the Rose flag should flout the heavens, yet call not down the penal fire. The yard was thronged; and on the stage was many a bird of courtly feather, perched on his sixpenny stool; whilst the late comer lay at length upon the rushes, his thoughts wrested from his hose and points by the mystery of the play.

Happy, thrice happy wights, thus fenced and rounded in from the leprous, eating cares of life! Happy ye, who, even with a penny piece, can transport yourselves into a land of fairy—can lull the pains of flesh with the music of high thoughts! The play goes on, with all its influences. Where is the courtier? Ten thousand miles from the glassy floor of a palace, lying on a bank, listening to a reed piping in Arcady. Where the man of thrift? He hath shuffled off his trading suit, and dreams himself a shepherd of the golden time. Where the wife-ridden husband, doubtful of a natural right to his own soul? He is an Indian emperor, flushed with the mastery of ten thousand slaves! Where is the poor apprentice—he who hath weals upon his back for twopence lost on Wednesday? He is in El Dorado, strutting upon gold. Thus works the play—let it go on. Our business calls us to the outside.

There is scarcely a passenger to be seen on Bank-side. Three or four boys loiter about the theatre, some trying, through a deceitful crevice, to catch a glimpse of the play—some tending horses, until the show be done. Apart from

these, his arms crossed, leaning against a post, his eyes fixed on the Rose flag,—stands a youth, whose face, though perfect in its beauty, has yet a troubled air. As he stands, watching the rustling beacon, it almost seems—so fixed is his look—as though he held some converse with it; as though the fortunes of his future life were woven in its web in mystic characters, and he, with his spirit straining from his eyes, were seeking to decipher them. Now—so would imagination work—there seemed voluble speech in its flapping folds, and now a visible face. The youth turned from gazing on the flag to the open river. Some spirit was upon him; and, through his eyes, gave to vulgar objects a new and startling form. He was in a day-dream of wonder and beauty; and as it is told that those doomed to the ocean with hearts yearning for the land see fields and pleasant gardens in the heaving wave,—so our hero, tricked by his errant fancy, gazed breathless at new wonders sweeping before him. A golden mist shrouded the mansions and warehouses on the strand. Each common thing of earth glowed and dilated under the creative spirit of the dreamer. The Thames seemed fixed—whilst a thousand forms moved along the silver pavement. The sky shone brighter—harmony was in the air! The shades move on.

First passes one bearing in his hand a skull: wisdom is in his eyes, music on his tongue—the soul of contemplation in the flesh of an Apollo: the greatest wonder and the deepest truth—the type of great thought and sickly fancies—the arm of clay, wrestling with and holding down the angel. He looks at the skull, as though death had written on it the history of man. In the distance one white arm is seen above the tide, clutching at the branches of a willow "growing askant a brook."

Now there are sweet, fitful noises in the air: a shaggy monster, his lips glued to a bottle—his eyes scarlet with wine—wine throbbing in the very soles of his feet—heaves

and rolls along, mocked at by a sparkling creature couched in a cowslip's bell.

And now a maiden and a youth, an eternity of love in their passionate looks, with death as a hooded priest joining their hands: a gay gallant follows them, led on by Queen Mab, twisting and sporting as a porker's tail.

The horns sound—all, all is sylvan! Philosophy in hunter's suit, stretched beneath an oak, moralises on a wounded deer, festering, neglected, and alone: and now the bells of folly jingle in the breeze, and the suit of motley glances among the greenwood.

The earth is blasted—the air seems full of spells: the shadows of the Fates darken the march of the conqueror: the hero is stabbed with air-drawn steel.

The waves roar like lions round the cliff: the winds are up, and howling; yet there is a voice, louder than theirs—a voice made high and piercing by intensest agony! The singer comes, his white head "crowned with rank fumitor"—madness, tended by truth, speaking through folly!

The Adriatic basks in the sun: there is a street in Venice; "a merry bargain" is struck—the Jew slinks like a balked tiger from the court.

Enter a pair of legs, marvellously cross-gartered.

And hark! to a sound of piping, comes one with an ass's head wreathed with musk roses and a spirit playing around it like a wildfire.

A handkerchief, with "magic in the web," comes like a trail of light, and disappears.

A leek—a leek of immortal green shoots up!

Behold! like to the *San Trinidad*, swims in a buck-basket labelled "to Datchet Meads."

There gleam two roses, red and white—a Roman cloak stabbed through and through—a lantern of the watch of Messina!

A thousand images of power and beauty pass along.

The glorious pageant is over—no! fancy is yet at work.—

Yonder ship, laden with sherris, canary, and spice—see how her masts and rigging fall and melt, like metal in a furnace! Her huge hold, stowed to the deck with wine, swells and distends, and takes another form. We see no ship, but a man mountain, with a belly that "would sink a navy." One butt of red wine is sinking in the Thames: no; it moves and shapes itself into something like a nose, which, rising like a comet, fiery red, before him of the abdomen, seems as 'twere purposed for a torch to light him "'twixt tavern and tavern." And see——

But the day-dream of the youth is broken. A visitor, mounted, has just arrived, and would fain enter the play-house; but there is none bold or strong enough to hold his steed. At least a dozen men—it was remarkable that each had in his bosom a roll of paper, it might be the draft of a play—rushing from the Rose, strove to hold the bridle: but some the horse trod down—some he struck paralytic with his flashing eye—some ran away, half distraught at his terrible neighing. At length our dreamer approached the steed, which, as it had been suddenly turned to stone, stood still. The rider dismounted and entered the play-house, leaving his horse tended by our hero. The animal ate from out his hand—answered with its proud head the caresses of its feeder—and, as it pranced and curveted, a sound of music, as from the horny hoofs of dancing satyrs, rose from the earth. All stood amazed at the sudden taming of the horse.

The play ended—the audience issued from the doors. The story had run from mouth to mouth, touching the new-comer and his horse. All hurried about the stranger, to see him mount. He, with some difficulty, such was the crowd, leaped on his steed, when, inclining his face, radiant

with smiles, towards the youth who had performed the office of his groom, he flashed like a sunbeam out of sight. All stood marble with astonishment. At length the immortal quality of the visitor was made manifest, for, in the press and hurry, a feather had fallen from one of his wings—albeit, concealed and guarded by a long cloak.

The youth who had taken charge of the horse seized, as his rightful wages, on this relic of Phœbus, and, taking his way, he fashioned it into a pen, and with it from time to time gave to the "airy nothings" of his day-dream "a local habitation and a name."

It is modestly hoped that this well-authenticated story will wholly silence the sceptical objections of Mr Steevens.

THE EPITAPH OF SIR HUGH EVANS

"THERE's pippins and cheese to come!"

Such are the hopeful words of an old divine—of one Sir Hugh Evans—a preacher distinguished in the latter part of the reign of Henry the Fourth, not so much for the ascetic asperity of his speech and bearing as for a certain household wisdom that ran like threads of gold through his most familiar sentences, enhanced and recommended by a blithe look and a chirping voice; all of which excellent gifts made him the oracle and friend of the yeomen and goodwives of Windsor. These inestimable qualities—to say nothing of

his miraculous hand at bowls, and his marvellous sagacity as a brewer of sack—had, as we have already inferred, endeared him to his flock: and, living, and preaching, and gossiping in a neighbourhood of love and good fellowship, the parson grew old, his cheek mellowing to the last; when, in the year——, he fell, like an over-ripe plum from the tree, into his grave—all the singing men and maids and little children of mournful Windsor following their teacher to his couch of earth, and chanting around it the hymn best loved by him when living.

In sooth, the funeral of the poor knight was most bravely attended. Six stout morrice-men carried the corpse from a cottage, the property of the burly, roystering Host of the "Garter"—a pretty rustic nook, near Datchet Meads, whither the worn-out parson had, for six months before his death, retired from the stir and bustle of Windsor—and where, on a summer evening, he might be seen seated in the porch, patiently hearing little John Fenton lisp his Berkshire Latin,—the said John being the youngest grandson of old Master Page, and godchild of the grey-headed, big-bellied landlord of the "Garter." Poor Sir Hugh had long been afflicted with a vexing asthma; and, though in his gayer times he would still brew sack for younger revellers, telling them rare tales of "poor dear Sir John and the Prince," he had, for seven years before his death, eschewed his former sports, and was never known to hear of a match of bowls that he did not shake his head and sigh,—and then, like a stout-hearted Christian as he was, soothe his discomfited spirit with the snatch of an old song. Doctor Caius had, on his death-bed, bequeathed to Sir Hugh an inestimable treasure; nothing less than a prescription—a very charm—to take away a winter cough: for three years had it been to Sir Hugh as the best gift of King Oberon; but the fourth winter the amulet cast its virtue, and from year to year the parson grew worse and worse, -when, in

the sixty-eighth year of his age, on a bright May morning, in the arms of his gossip and friend, staid, sober Master Slender, with the Host of the "Garter" seated (for he was too fat to stand) in an arm-chair at the bedside, and Master Page and Master Ford at the foot, Sir Hugh Evans, knight and priest, passed into death, as into a sweet, sound sleep. His wits had wandered somewhat during the night,—for he talked of "Herne the hunter" and "a boy in white"; and then he tried to chirrup a song,—and Masters Page and Ford smiled sadly in each other's face as the dying man, chuckling as he carolled, trolled forth—

> "Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,
> Till candles, and starlight, and moonshine be out."

As the day advanced, the dying man became more calm; and at length, conscious of his state, he passed away at half-past nine in the morning, with a look of serenest happiness—and "God be with you!" were the last words that fluttered from his lips.

The personal property of the dead parson was shared among his friends and servants. Master Slender inherited his "Book of Songs and Posies"; the Host of the "Garter" the sword with which Sir Hugh had dared Doctor Caius to mortal combat; and all his wardrobe, consisting of two entire suits and four shirts, somewhat softened the grief of Francis Simple—son of Simple, former retainer of Master Slender, and for three years body-servant of dead Sir Hugh. A sum of two shillings and fourpence, discovered among the effects of the deceased, was faithfully distributed to the parish poor.

There was sadness in Windsor streets as the funeral procession moved slowly towards the church. Old men and women talked of the frolics of Sir Hugh; and though they said he had been in his day something of the merriest for a parson, yet more than one gossip declared it to be her belief

that "worse men had been made bishops." A long train of friends and old acquaintance followed the body. First, came worthy Master Slender—chief mourner. He was a bachelor, a little past his prime of life, with a sad and sober brow, and a belly inclining to portliness. The severe censors of Windsor had called him woman-hater, for that in his songs and in his speech he would bear too hardly on the frailties and fickleness of the delicate sex; for which unjust severity older people might perchance, and they would, have found some small apology. For, in truth, Master Slender was a man of softest heart; and though he studiously avoided the company of women, he was the friend of all the children of Datchet and Windsor. He always carried apples in his pocket for little John Fenton, youngest child of Anne Fenton, formerly Anne Page; and was once found sitting in Windsor Park, with little John upon his knees,—Master Slender crying like a chidden maid. Of this enough. Let it now suffice to say that Master Slender—for the Host was too heavy to walk—was chief mourner. Then followed Ford and his wife; next, Mr Page and his son William,—poor Mrs Page being dead two years at Christmas, from a cold caught with over dancing, and then obstinately walking through the snow from her old gossip Ford's. Next in the procession were Master Fenton and his wife, and then followed their eight children in couples; then Robin—now a prosperous vintner, once page to Sir John,—with Francis Simple; and then a score of little ones, to whom the poor dead parson would give teaching in reading and writing,—and, where he marked an apter wit among his free disciples, something of the Latin accidence. These were all that followed Sir Hugh Evans to his rest—for death had thinned the thick file of his old acquaintance. One was wanting, who would have added weight and dignity to the ceremony—who, had he not some few years before been called to fill the widest grave that was ever dug for flesh, would

have cast from his broad and valiant face a lustrous sorrow on the manes of the dead churchman,—who would have wept tears, rich as wine, upon the coffin of his old friend; for to him, in the convenient greatness of his heart, all men, from the prince of the blood to the nimming knave who stole the "handle of Mrs Bridget's fan," were, by turns, friends and good fellows; who, at the supper at the "Garter" (for the Host gave a solemn feast in celebration of the mournful event), would have moralised on death and mortal accidents, and, between his tankards, talked fine philosophy—true divinity; would have caroused to the memory of the dead in the most religious spirit of sack,

and have sent round whole flagons of surest consolation. Alas! this great, this seeming invincible spirit, this mighty wit, with jests all but rich enough to laugh Death from his purpose—to put him civilly aside with a quip, bidding him to pass on and strike at leaner bosoms,—he himself, though with "three fingers on the ribs," had been hit; and he, who seemed made to live for ever, an embodied principle of fleshly enjoyment,—he, the great Sir John—

"He was dead and nailèd in his chest."

Others, too, passed away with their great dominator, were wanting at the ceremonial. Where was he, with nose enshrining jests richer to us than rubies? Truly liberal, yet most unfortunate spirit, hapless Bardolph; where, when Sir Hugh was laid upon the lap of his mother earth, oh! where wert thou? Where was that glorious feature that, had the burying been at the dead time of night, would have outshone the torches? Where was that all-rich—all-lovely nose? Alack! it may be in the maws of French falcons; its luckless owner throttled on the plains of Agincourt for almost the smallest theft; hung up by fellest order of the Fifth Henry—of his old boon companion, his brother robber on the field of Gadshill. And could Harry march from the plain with laurel on his brow and leave the comrade of his youth—his fellow-footpad—with neck mortally cut "with edge of penny cord"? Should such a chaplet have been intertwined with such hemp? The death of Bardolph is a blot—a foul, foul blot on the 'scutcheon of Agincourt. But let us pass the ingratitude and tyranny of kings, to dwell wholly upon the burial of Sir Hugh.

Who shall say that all the spirits with whom the parson was wont to recreate himself,—to counsel, to quarrel,—who shall say that they did not all mingle in the procession, all once again pass through the streets of ancient Windsor? The broad shadow of Sir John, arm-in-arm with the spirit

of Mrs Page,—Bardolph and Nym, descended from their gibbets, new from the plains of France, to make melancholy holiday in Berkshire,—learned Dr Caius, babbling Quickly, and Pistol, her broken, war-worn husband, kicked down the tavern stairs, where in his old days he served as drawer, and was killed,—and Shallow, immortal Shallow, his lean ghost fluttering with a sense of office,—who shall say that all these did not crowd about the coffin of good Sir Hugh, and, as he was laid in the grave, give him a smiling welcome to his everlasting habitation? Let us not, in this day of light, be charged with superstition, if in these pages—perpetual as adamant—we register our belief, a belief mingling in our very blood, that all these illustrious ghosts followed, and, with their dim majesty, ennobled the procession,—albeit, to the eyes of the uninitiate, none but the living did service to the dead.

Sir Hugh Evans was laid by the side of his old friend and old antagonist, Doctor Caius; and, for many years, there was a story among the good wives of Windsor, that the fairies, once a year, danced round the grave of Sir Hugh, the turf upon it growing as bright as emeralds; and, in a hawthorn bush, but a few paces from the spot, "melodious birds" did, at certain seasons, "sing madrigals."

We have now to speak of the epitaph of the good Sir Hugh. More than four hundred years have passed away since the mortal part of that most worthy piece of Welsh divinity was consigned to dust. It may be a lesson to ambition to learn that the exact spot where he was buried cannot, at the present time, be verified: the ablest antiquarians are at odds about it. Proud, however,—and, we trust, not unbecomingly so,—are we to be the means of publishing to the world the epitaph of Sir Hugh, copied from his tombstone, in the possession of a gentleman in Berkshire, who has resisted our most earnest supplications that he would suffer us to make known his name. This favour he has resolutely refused; but has, in the most

handsome manner, presented us with the use of the tombstone, together with a most voluminous, and no less satisfactory, account of its genuineness. Happy should we have been could we have found room for the history of the relic at full. Leaving it, however, for the archives of the Antiquarian Society, we must content ourselves with stating that the document fully proves that the tombstone was erected from the private munificence of Master Slender, and that the pithy and most touching epitaph inscribed upon it was selected by his happy taste, as combining all the excellences of an epitaph in the fewest words—these words having the further recommendation of being uttered, on a memorable occasion, by the deceased himself. The words were repeated to Master Slender by his servant Simple, despatched, on a certain day, by Sir Hugh with a letter touching the wooing of Anne Page. After long pondering, reviewing every circumstance of his ancient friendship with the dead Sir Hugh,—seated, one sunny afternoon, on the bench outside the "Garter," the words came jump again into the mind of Slender; and quickly raising and emptying his tankard, he marched, like a man resolved, to the stone-cutter, and—for he cared not for Latin—bade the workman cut on the stone—(the inscription, considering its age, is in a wonderful state of preservation)—the words that follow :—

HUGH EVANS
PRIESTE
Dyed atte Datchette
MAY—ANNO DOMI 14—
AGED—
"THERE'S PIPPINS AND CHEESE—TO COME."

How simply, yet how beautifully, does this epitaph shadow forth the fruitfulness of the future! How delicate, and yet how sufficing, its note of promise!—

"THERE'S PIPPINS AND CHEESE—TO COME."

Pippins! Does not the word, upon a tombstone, conjure up thoughts of Hesperian gardens—of immortal trees, laden with golden fruit; with delicious produce, the growth of a soil where not one useless weed takes root, where no baneful snake rustles among the grass, where no blight descends, no canker withers? Where we may pluck from the consenting boughs, and eat, and eat—and never, as in earthly things, find a worm at the core, a rottenness at the heart, where outside beauty tempted us to taste? "There's pippins *to come!*" The evil and misery gathered with the apple of death will be destroyed—forgotten—by the ambrosial fruit to be plucked for ever in immortal orchards!—

"THERE'S PIPPINS AND CHEESE—TO COME!"

What a picture of plenty in its most beneficent aspect—what a prospect of pastoral abundance!

Think of it, ye oppressed of the earth! Ye, who are bowed and pinched by want—ye, who are scourged by the hands of persecution—ye, crushed with misery—ye, doomed to the bitterness of broken faith; take this consolation to your wearied souls—apply this balsam to your bruised hearts.—Though all earth be to you as barren as the sands—

"THERE'S PIPPINS AND CHEESE—TO COME!"

BULLY BOTTOM'S BABES

The immortal weaver of Athens hath a host of descendants. They are scattered throughout every country of the world, their moral likeness to their sage ancestor becoming stronger in the land of wealth and luxury. They are a race marked and distinguished by the characteristics of their first parent —omnivorous selfishness and invulnerable self-complacency. They wear the ass's head, yet know it not; and heedless of the devotion, have the Titania fortune still to round their temples "with coronets of fresh and fragrant flowers." They sleep to the watching of an enamoured fairy, and wake only to new experiences of her tenderness and beauty.

> "Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
> Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
> Feed him with apricocks and dewberries;
> With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries
> The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
> And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs,
> And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
> To have my love to bed and to arise:

And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies."

Have we not here the adjuration of the fairy fortune to all her ministering delights and pleasures of the world, to render service and to do homage to the dull-brained creature of her passion? Extract the poetry, the delicious fancy, from the injunction of the Queen of Fairies, and what is it but the command of worldly luck to her many servitors, to seek all imaginable delights for the sordid lump of earth, the mere animal with an "ass's head" her diseased and wayward affections have made an idol of? Is not the world thronged with these Bottoms? In shape, in lineament, in every moral feature, are they not the veritable descendants of the swaggering homespun Athenian? They are the very nurslings of fortune, the monstrous and uncouth objects of her blind and fickle passion; yet do they submit to her endearments with no distrust, no passing suspicion of their own worthiness. They receive her blandishments as nothing more than a just and rightful reward for excellence. They cannot conceive how it could have been otherwise. Their imagination, vassal to their self-complacency, will not allow them to change places for an instant with their less prosperous fellow. No; Fortune dotes upon them, and how can she help it? Her extravagant fondness is not excused, but justified, made inevitable by the excelling worthiness of their parts. Hence, with what serenity they issue mandates to the retainers of their fond mistress—with what lordly self-conviction of their own merits they accept their service! How they order Cobweb, Peaseblossom, and Mustardseed to do their fantastic bidding, as though their bondmaster, created with natural and inalienable right to their feudality. Nothing in the way of greatness surprises them—no flattery startles them.

"Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful!" cries Titania

to her ass-headed lover, and he by no syllable disclaims the truth, the justice of the eulogy. He swallows the praise as his natural food, takes the sweet sound of his doting goddess as rightful, every-day applause. He is loved by a goddess, for the goddess—we have said it—cannot help it.

The insensibility of the sons of Bottom is one of their grand, their unerring characteristics. It is this profitable faculty that would make them task the daintiest spirits for their own poorest, vilest wants, and dream of nothing monstrous or extravagant in such application.

"I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb: if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you."

"Scratch my head, Peaseblossom."

"Mounsieur Cobweb; good mounsieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped bumble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag."

Thus spoke the great progenitor, Bottom; and of a verity his children are not more shame-faced task-masters.

Next, let us contrast the power and beauty of delights placed by Queen Titania at his will, with the mean, the sordid wretchedness of Bottom's appetite and tastes.

"*Tit.* What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

"*Bot.* I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let's have the tongs and bones.

"*Tit.* Or say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

"*Bot.* Truly a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

"*Tit.* I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

"*Bot.* I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me: I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

"*Tit.* Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.

Fairies, be gone, and be always away.
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
Oh, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!"

Is this a scene of mere fairy-land? No; but a thing of hard, everyday prosaic life. Have we not about us the children, the thick-headed descendants of Bottom, with the Titania fortune tempting them to the enjoyments of the rarest and sweetest delights? and yet the coarse animal craving of

"The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,"

make answer to her dainty invitations with the poorest, coarsest desires! A goddess bids them choose music, and they are for nothing but "tongs and bones." Fortune prays them to the banquet on immortal food, and, with asinine stubbornness, they bray for "a handful or two of dried peas." They are warbled to by a goddess, and, unconscious of the homage, they make answer with the sense of an ass. We ask it, did Bottom die childless?

Bottom's babes flourish in twenty paths of life. We meet his children in the stock-market; we see them sleek and smug behind the counter; we catch their faces through carriage windows; we hear their tuneful voices from the county-bench, the city-court, yea, in nobler convocations still. Sometimes, too, like their Athenian father, they are "translated." No matter for the difference of calling, the influence of education, there is the family face—the family voice; the expression of self-blessed insensibility, the note of self-complacent gratulation. Throughout the life-teeming page of Shakespeare there is not a finer poetic rendering of a commonplace, vulgar class than Bottom.

The very heart of their mystery beats in the bosom of the weaver. His eagerness to be all things, from an assured conviction of his fitness for everything, is only their daily

conceit dramatically developed. In that brief scene, what a picture have we, what a history of the ten thousand incidents of prose life! What an exhibition of the profound busy-bodies who clamorously desire to be Wall, Lion, Moonshine, and Pyramus too, not from an acquired belief, but as it would seem from a natural instinct of their own fitness for the combined charges! How triumphantly does Bottom swagger down his fellows! How small, mean, degenerate —what nobodies are they, before that giant conceit, the thick-skulled weaver![1] And in all this there is nothing that is not the severest transcript of human life. We laugh at it; and the next moment we are touched into gravity by a reflection of its serious meaning—its philosophic comments on the vulgar pretence of the every-day world.

The finer part of the picture, in which as we receive it, Shakespeare, with immortal tints, has shadowed forth the souls of a herd of men, is Bottom doted upon by the Queen of Fairies. It is here we have the true lineaments of a vulgar nature emblazoned by luck. It is here we recognise the self-sufficient creature of wordly success—the ignorant bashaw of life wearing his bravery as an ordained and necessary part of himself. He has the riches, the sweets of the earth, at his command, and he pauses not in passing wonder at his prosperity. To him there is no such power as a Providence. It is a part of the world's destiny that he should be precisely what he is; he is the begotten of fate, and owes no obligation to vulgar fortune.

Nor are Bottom's Babes less like their putative sire, if

[1] It is impossible, we think, for the reader, if he witnessed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Covent Garden last season (1840) to banish from his memory the *Flute* of Keeley in this scene. How meekly, how resignedly he gave place to the burley consequence of *Bottom*. It was not imbecility, but a mute absorbing sense of homage to the greatness of the weaver, one of those subtle touches that show the sympathy of the actor with the profoundest meanings of the poet.

they have suffered no transformation. There are those who come into the world with the ass's head, and live and die wound in the arms of doting wealth. The hard taskmasters of life are often of these. The foolish, arrogant censors of the faults and backslippings of penury are to be found among them—the full fleshed moralists who shake their shaggy ears at the small delinquencies of struggling men. They eat, drink, sport, and sleep in fairyland; their lightest wish evokes a minister to do their bidding; and in their most fantastic, foolish moods, still Fortune—weak, besotted quean!—cries, with silverest voice:—

"Oh, how I love ye! How I dote on ye!"

Bottom as we opine, considered in his truthfulness, in his reflective powers of worldly semblance, awakens our pensiveness, not our mirth. We think of the thousands of his children, and the smile that would break at the mere words of the weaver, is chequered by the thought of his prosaic offspring. Yes; his offspring. It matters not that you point to—in his carriage, that you run through his accredited genealogy, that you show his armorial bearings. We answer—if he receive the goods of fortune as his *right*, with no thankfulness for the gifts, no gratitude displayed by constant sympathy with the wants and weaknesses of suffering man, though you call him marquis, we say he is the Babe of Bottom; and for his quarterings, though they date from the Conquest, the eye of our philosophy sees nought on his carriage panels but an ass's head in a field, proper; and in the motto reads—"A bottle of hay!"

SHAKESPEARE IN CHINA

"I cannot tell that the wisest Mandarin now living in China is not indebted for part of his energy and sagacity to Shakespeare and Milton, even though it should happen that he never heard of their names."

—Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres.*

We do great injustice to the College of Mandarins, if we think that body at the present time ignorant of the marvels of Shakespeare. No: Canton has produced its commentator, and, by means of his explanatory genius, it is hoped that in a few years the whole Celestial Empire will, in the fulness of its knowledge, bow to the majesty of the poet. At this moment we have before us a radiant evidence of the admission of the great teacher into the Sacred City: believe it, astounded reader, Shakespeare has gone farther than Nieuhoff. England, however—that England who has shown herself such an idolatress of her darling son—who

has encircled the house in which he first drew breath with a golden rail—who has secured it from possible destruction at the hands of the bigot, by making it the property of the State—that England who, when the tree planted by the bard was felled by the axe, wept as she turned the timber into 'bacco-stoppers [1]—that England who, even at the present time, only a little more than two centuries after his death, has already begun to think of the propriety of erecting, at some future day, a national monument to her poet—that England cannot, after the many and affecting instances of her deep and maternal love towards her most illustrious child, refuse to aid in the dissemination of Shakespearanity in any corner of the world, but at the present interesting crisis, more particularly in the empire of China.

The cry that the Chinese are not yet fit for Shakespeare —a cry raised in the same acute spirit in which people in chains have been said not to be fit for freedom—can, we think, have no bad effect on even moderately liberal men, after the production of papers now beneath our hands. All we ask of the Foreign Minister is a company, to act either on board Chinese junks or on shore, as the intellectual wants of his Majesty may require; nay, if under the direction of their own stage-manager, to exhibit themselves at any distance in the interior. The company to be paid and clothed by the government for whose benefit they act, with this condition, that they be subject to the laws and customs of the Chinese, obediently shaving their eyebrows and letting their tails grow. For the passing difficulty of the language, that, we have no doubt, will soon be overcome; many of the actors, we religiously believe it, speaking and playing equally well in English or in Chinese. We now come to the proofs of the fit condition of the people for

[1] The Mulberry-tree was cut down; and the race of Gastrels is not extinct.

Shakespeare—for that which they will "hail as a boon," and which we shall part with as a drug.

Some months since, it was our fortune to be present at an auction of curiosities from the East—shells, parrots, rice-paper, chop-sticks, japanned cabinets, and cut-throat sparrows. Our friend Peregrine—he had just arrived from the Great Pyramid, from the top of which, and by means of a most excellent glass, he had discovered, and afterwards made captive, three giraffes—bade money for a picture. As it was a scene from Shakespeare, there were of course no opposing bidders, and he became the owner of what proved to be an exquisite evidence of Chinese art and imitation; in brief, no other than a copy faithfully drawn, and most brilliantly coloured by an artist at Canton of the Boydell picture of Falstaff in the Buck-basket, and the Merry Wives. The picture, however, proved in itself to be of little value compared to the essay found to be inserted at the back between the picture and the frame; being written on paper, half a quire of which would not exceed the thickness of a butterfly's wing, it is no wonder that the treasure escaped even the meritorious vigilance of an auctioneer. It is this essay that we now propose to submit to the reader, in evidence of the condition of China for an instant export of a company of fine Shakespearian actors. When we state that the essay has been printed by its author in at least one of the Canton journals, the dissemination and adoption of the principles comprised in it, over the whole of China, cannot for half a moment be a matter of doubt.

We regret that we cannot wholly acquit our intelligent Mandarin of the taint of ingratitude. It is evident that his views of English history—at least of that portion in which Falstaff conspicuously appears, for the writer suffers no subject to escape in any way involved in the character of the immortal knight—have been gathered from one of our fellow countrymen; he has, if we may be allowed to say

it, sucked the brain, as a "weasel sucks eggs," of some enlightened but obscure supercargo whom he has left unhonoured and unthanked. How different, in a similar case, was the conduct of an Englishman: our deep veneration of the national character will not, at this happy moment, suffer us to be silent on the grateful magnanimity of Mr Nahum Tate, who, in his preface to his improved version of *King Lear*, returns his "thanks to an *ingenious friend* who first pointed out the tragedy" to his condescending notice! The silence of the Mandarin towards his instructor is the more strange, as ingratitude is not the vice of the barbarian. An ingenious friend points out a skulking, unarmed straggler to a Cossack; the soldier makes him prisoner, cuts off his ears, slits his nose, bores his tongue, and having mounted the captive behind him, in the cordial spirit of Nahum Tate, "thanks his ingenious friend" for his information! But it is so; in this particular our mandarin fails in comparison with the Cossack and with Nahum Tate.

We now lay before the reader the Essay of Ching the Mandarin, who, it will be seen, in his orders to the painter employed to copy the original picture—by whom taken to China remains unknown—has, with national exactness, given the birth and education not only of the author of Falstaff, but of Falstaff himself, together with glancing notices of—Windsor wives and Windsor soap.

It is, perhaps, only due to the translator, to state that by our express solicitation he has a little lowered the orientalism of the original, whilst he has at the same time endeavoured to preserve the easy, conversational tone of the educated Chinese.

"CHING TO TING.

"I send, O Ting, from the barbarian ship, a picture of barbarians. Make one for your friend, like unto it; in size, in shape, and colour, even the same. But why should

I waste words with Ting, whose pencil is true as the tongue of Confutzee? No; I will straightway deliver to him all my studies have made known to me of the barbarians written on the canvas before him: for how can even Ting paint the faces of barbarians in their very truth, if he knows not the history not only of themselves but of their fathers?

"The he barbarian with the big belly was called Forlstoff, and in time was known as Surgeon Forlstoff: from which, there is no doubt, he was a skilful leech in the army of the barbarian king, more of whom in good season. Forlstoff's father was one Shak or Shake, Speare or Spear; for there have been great tumults among the barbarians about the *e*. In nothing does the ignorance of the English barbarians more lamentably discover itself than in the origin they obstinately give to their Shakespeare; who, according to them, was, like the great Brahme, hatched in an egg on the bank of a river, as may be seen in a thousand idle books in which he is called the 'Swan of Haveone.' And this conceit was further manifested in the building of a place called 'the Swan Theatre,' where the barbarians were wont to worship. There is little known of Shakespeare's wife, Forlstoff's mother, and that little proves her to have been an idle person, given to great sleep and sloth, as is shown by her getting nothing at the death of her husband but his 'second-best bed!'

"If Forlstoff would not, at a later time of life, leave off stealing, there is little doubt that he owed the fault to his father, Shakespeare, who was forced to fly to London, which is a sacred city for all thieves, for having stolen an antelope, an animal consecrated to the higher kinds of barbarians, and which it is death for the poor to touch. Indeed, the flesh of the antelope is to be eaten with safety by very few of the barbarians, it having killed even many of the Eldermen immediately after dinner.

"When Shakespeare came to London he was poor and

without friends, and he held the horses of the rich barbarians who came to worship at a temple on the banks of the river. In time he learned to make shoes for the horses; and in such esteem are the shoes still held by the barbarians, that they are bought at any price, and nailed at the threshold of their houses and barns; for where they are nailed, the foolish natives think no fire, no pestilence will come, and no evil thing have any strength. Such is the silly idolatry of the barbarians.

"At length Shakespeare got admitted into the temple; and there he showed himself master of the greatest arts; and he wrote charms upon paper which, it is said, will make a man weep or laugh with very happiness,—will bring spirits from the sky and devils from the water,—will open the heart of a man and show what creeps within it,—will now snatch a crown from a king, and now put wings to the back of a beggar. And all this they say Shakespeare did, and studied not. No, beloved Ting, he was not like Sing, who, though but a poor cowherd, became wise by poring on his book spread between the horns of his cow, he travelling on her back.

"And Shakespeare proceeded in his marvels, and he became rich; and even the queen of the barbarians was seen to smile at him, and once, with a burning look, to throw her glove at him; but Shakespeare, it is said, to the discomfiture of the queen, returned the glove, taking no further notice of the amatory invitation.

"In a ripe season of his life Shakespeare gave up conjuring, and returned to the village on the banks of the river Haveone, where, as it is ignorantly believed, he was hatched, and where he lived in the fulness of fortune. He had laid down his conjuring-rod and taken off his gown, and passed for nothing more than a man, and, it is said—though you, beloved Ting, who see the haughty eyes and curling noses of the lesser man mandarins, can, after what I have writ of

"Became wise by poring on his book"

Shakespeare, hardly believe it—thought himself nothing more.

"Shakespeare built himself a house and planted a tree. The house is gone, but the barbarians preserve bricks of it in their inner chambers, even—I tremble as I pen it—as we preserve the altars of our gods.

"The tree was cut down by a fakir in a brain fever, but the wood is still worshipped. And this, O Ting! I would not ask you to believe had not your own eyes witnessed that wonderful tree,[1] the leaves whereof, falling to the ground, become mice! Hence learn that the leaves of

[1] See Navarrete's *China* for the account of this tree; underneath which, we humbly suggest, it would be as well to keep a cat.

Shakespeare's mulberry have become men, and on a certain day every year, with mulberry boughs about their heads, their bodies clothed in their richest garments, they chant praises to the memory of Shakespeare, and drink wine to his name.

"Shakespeare—Forlstoff's father, and the father of a hundred lusty sons and daughters, such as until that time had never been born, Shakespeare—died! He was buried in a chest of cedar, set about with plates of gold. On one of these plates was writ some magic words; for thieves, breaking into the grave, were fixed and changed to stone; and are now to be seen even as they were first struck by the charm of the magician. And so much, beloved Ting, of Shakespeare, Forlstoff's father."

That our Mandarin has herein displayed very popular abilities for the difficult task of a commentator, no one who has read many volumes of Shakespearian commentaries will, we believe, deny. It is observable that in many instances he makes his facts; a custom of particular advantage to the indulgence of the most peculiar opinions and conclusions. We have read some writers who, deprived of this privilege, would really have nothing to work upon. The pleasure of making a giant, great as it possibly may be, cannot be comparable to the delight of killing him, our own handiwork. If, however, our reader will bear with us, we will proceed with the labours of Ching on the character of Falstaff, and on those personages and events, directly and indirectly, associated with his glorious name. Falstaff in China! Jack Falstaff on a regimen of rice!

"Forlstoff was born in the third hour of the morning; and at his birth the roundness of his belly and the whiteness of his head betokened his future greatness. But little is known of his early life; save that he assisted in the temples of the barbarians, where his voice, once remarkable for its sweetness, became broken with the zeal of the singer.

He then travelled with a juggler, and—if lying were not the especial vice of the barbarians—did greater wonders than even our own Yiyi. The Eldermen of London—so named because chosen from the oldest inhabitants—are known by a ring upon the thumb; this ring Forlstoff, to the admiration of the barbarian court, crept through and through like any worm, and was promoted by the king therefore. I should, however, do evil unto truth did I not advise you, O Ting, that this feat of Forlstoff seems greater than it really is: for a tame eagle being kept at the court of the king, it was afterwards discovered that a talon of the bird was something thicker than the waist of the said Forlstoff.

"It is certain that Forlstoff, a short time after his feat with the ring, became a student in a place called Clemency Inn; which, as its name implies, is a temple wherein youths study to become meek and merciful, to love all men as brothers of their own flesh, and to despise the allurements of wealth. There was with him another student, called Robert Shaller, who afterwards became a mandarin, or, in the barbarian tongue, a justice of the peace, being promoted to that office because he was like a double radish, and had his head carved with a knife. He was, when at Clemency Inn, dressed in an eel-skin, and used to sleep in a lute-case. He lent Forlstoff what the barbarians call a thousand pounds, which Forlstoff was honest enough to—acknowledge.

"I next find Forlstoff in company with one Princeal, the son of the barbarian king, and several thieves. Forlstoff—and here the vice of his father, Shakespeare, breaks out in the child—tempts the king's son to turn robber. He is, however, so ashamed of the wickedness, that he goes about it with a mask on his face, as a king's son ought.

"Forlstoff falls into disgrace with Princeal, and is sent by

him with soldiers to Coventry; that being a place in the barbarian country where no man speaks to his neighbour. After some delay Forlstoff marches through Coventry to fight one Pursy, who can ride up a straight hill, and is therefore called Hotspur. Forlstoff fights with him by—that is, near a clock, and kills him, Princeal, the king's son, meanly endeavouring to deprive Forlstoff of the honour.

"After the battle Forlstoff goes to dine with the king at Wincer, which is the royal manufactory for soap. Forlstoff pretends to love two wives at the same time, and is put by them in what is called by the barbarians a *buck*-basket—that is a basket for the finer sort of barbarians, their word *buck* answering to our *push*, and meaning high, handsome, grand. He is flung into the river, and saves himself by swimming to a garter. He is afterwards punished by being turned into the royal forest, with horns upon his head and chains upon his hands. Princeal, in time, becomes king, and discards Forlstoff, who goes home—goes to bed—does nothing but look at the ends of his fingers, talks of the green fields about Wincer, and dies.

"For the habits of Forlstoff, if they were not quite as virtuous as those of Fo, it was perhaps the fault of his times; for we have his own words to prove that they were once those of the best barbarians. He swore but few oaths—gambled but once a day—paid his debts four times—and took recreation only when he cared for it. He loved sack—a liquor that has puzzled the heads of the learned—without eggs, and was extraordinarily temperate in bread.

"His companions were thieves of the highest repute—but all, unhappily, died and left no sons!

"You will now, oh wise and virtuous Ting, directed by these few and feeble words, paint me the picture of Forlstoff and his two wives."

We put it to the impartial reader whether Ching, in the above estimate of the character of Falstaff, has not entitled himself to take rank with many Shakespearian commentators; and whether, if the Foreign Minister will not consent to ship a company of English actors to Canton, Ching should not be invited by the patrons of the British drama to preside in a London theatre.

SOLOMON'S APE

"For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks."—*Kings.*

A LEARNED rabbi, Ben Eli, had filled three thick MS. folios with the adventures of a certain ape, a sojourner at the court of the wisest of kings. Though the work has hitherto been withheld from the world, it seems not unlikely that it has long been the acknowledged model of many biographies. We conceive there is internal evidence in the history of thousands of courtiers, that the writers were aware how much the erudite Ben Eli could make of an ape. They who have gravely registered the slightest formality, the most evanescent word or gesture of certain heroes, must have had in their memory the first chronicler of monkey tricks. There was a time when it would have been the simplest and safest course to publish the entire folio: in former days, readers were like hogs, whose master had the right of pannage: they were turned into the literary forest to root, and grub up, and become as fat as they might. Now, it is not enough to show them the

tree of knowledge; but it is compulsory on those who drive the "dreadful trade," to clamber the branches, and gather the fruit. Nay, and when gathered, the apple serves not the epicure of our day, if it be not carefully pared and sliced; and, in some instances, presented on a fork of standard gold or silver. Moreover, cases have happened wherein the quality of the fork hath been cavilled for, more than that of the apple: thus, an embossed implement hath at times passed off a sorry crab. Once it was enough for wisdom to point out the wood where grew the nuts: now must she gather and crack them.

Thus much by way of feeble apology for the licence we have taken with the folios of the venerable Ben Eli. We have wandered through their forest of leaves; we have picked all we could lay our hands upon; we have torn away the husk—have broken the shell—and for the few kernels—gentle feeder, some of them are before you.

"And the ape became a favourite with the servants of Solomon. And the women smiled upon him, and the men laughed at his grimace; and the ape was puffed with pride, and became a proverb to the wise. And the ape forgot the mother that bore him, and the father that begat him, and the wood which, in the days of his youth, did give him shadow. And—brief be the words—the ape forgot he was an ape.

"There was a strange woman in the court of King Solomon. She was beautiful as light; and many men did try for the love of the strange woman; for she was a princess in her own country.

"And it fell, that the woman looked from her window, and beheld in the court below the ape stretched, sleeping in the sun: for it was high noon, and there was silence on all things. But in the heart of the strange woman there was no peace, for she thought of her father's tents.

"And the ape awoke, and, looking upward, beheld the strange woman. And there was vanity in his heart, and

he still looked upward. And the captive woman had compassion on the creature, and, believing that he hungered, cast him down a ripe pomegranate. And the ape did eat the pomegranate, and did lick his lips, and did say in his heart, 'Of a truth, the strange woman doth love me.'

"And the next day, at the same hour, the ape watched under the window of the strange woman, and again she did throw him fruit, which he did eat, and again did cry, 'Nay, it is certain she doth love me.'

"And the same thing came to pass on the third and fourth day.

"And in the stillness of the fifth day, when sleep lay upon the lids of the household, the ape did clamber the wall which did shut in the strange woman. And as he clomb, a voice still cried in his heart, 'She doth love me.'

"And the ape clambered up to the window of the strange woman; and when she saw the monster, she filled the chamber with her screams, and shrieked for help. And the servants of the chamber came to her aid; and the court was filled with a multitude.

"And the woman entreated to be saved from the ape; but the ape understood not her words, for still he said to himself, 'She doth love me.'

"And the men took staves, and did beat and bruise the ape, but the ape was not convinced; for yet he said, 'It is plain she doth love me.' And the ape fell wounded into the court beneath.

"And when they inquired of the matter, the woman said, 'I thought the ape did hunger, and I took compassion on his misery, and threw to him a pomegranate.'

"Then a wise man said to the woman—'Daughter, let not beauty give gifts unto fools; for out of the kindness of her heart do they misinterpret; and in the very offerings of her compassion do they breed an ill report.'

"And even as the wise man said these things, the ape lay in the court beneath, and did lick his sore, and did blow

the pouches of his cheeks, and cried, 'It is manifest, the strange woman doth love me.'

"There were two jugglers in the train of the Queen of Sheba. And they played, each with a serpent, before King Solomon.

"Now the queen sought to prove the knowledge of the king, and said,—'Oh, Solomon, thou who hast spoken of trees, from the cedar to the hyssop—also of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes;

"'Declare unto thy servant, which of the two is the true serpent (for one was cunningly fashioned like unto a living snake, and did move and writhe in the hands of the juggler); for, of a truth, there is but one of the two that hath life.'

"And the jugglers played with the snakes before the seat of King Solomon.

"Then the king did privily send for the ape; and when he was brought in, the king caused him to be led near unto the jugglers.

"And the ape passed one of the men who played with a snake, and took no note thereof; but as he approached the fellow who held the second snake, the ape did shake, and his hair did rise upon his skin, and he trembled exceedingly; wherefore King Solomon discovered the true snake, and all men praised the wisdom of the king.[1]

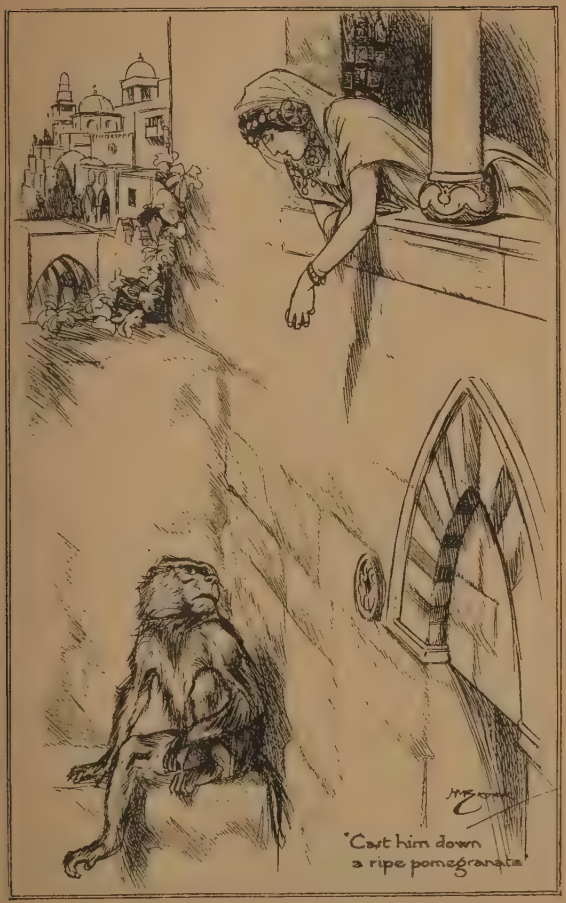
"Now the ape discovered that he had been made the judge between the true and the false snake, and his head did swell with the shouting, and he was puffed up with vain glory.

"And after some days a multitude stood before the judgment porch. And a strife had arisen between two carvers—skilful workmen were they both.

"Palm-trees, and open flowers, and every manner of curious carving had they carved.

"And they both claimed certain carvings of cherubim. And when they had spoken and called their witnesses, King Solomon paused to consider before he delivered judgment.

[1] See Rabbinical stories for a parallel case.



"Cast him down a ripe pomegranate"

"It so chanced that the ape had crept among the multitude, and had listened to the story of the carvers; and when he saw the king pause, he said to himself, 'Solomon is perplexed.'

"And the ape brake through the multitude, and ran to the porch, and did motion that he would judge between the carvers.

"And the ape did leap upon the shoulders of the one, and did caress him; but at the other he did scream, and grind his teeth. And Solomon understood the folly of the ape, and cried :—

"'It is ever so with the fool. Allow him the wisdom that perceiveth and shunneth a serpent, and straightway he will believe he hath understanding to judge even between the cherubim.'"

At present we must end our extracts from the pages of Ben Eli; though we cannot close without appending the final reflection of the learned rabbi, who, having narrated a thousand other instances of the folly of the ape—how he pilfered from the treasury, how he stole jewels to hang about him, and how he plucked bare divers peacocks to make himself a glory from their plumes, observes :—

"*An ape will ever be an ape, though compassed with gold, and silver, and ivory, and though his dwelling-place be even the court of King Solomon.*"

THE CASTLE BUILDERS OF PADUA

Giulio and Ippolito were sons of a farmer living near Padua. The old man was of a quiet and placable temper, rarely suffering any mischance to ruffle him, but, in the firm and placid hope of the future, tranquillising himself under the evil of the present. If blight came upon his corn one year, he would say 'twere a rare thing to have blights in two successive seasons; and so he would hope that the next harvest, in its abundance, might more than compensate for the scarcity of the last. Thus he lived from boyhood to age, and retained in the features of the old man a something of the lightness and vivacity of youth. His sons, however, bore no resemblance to their father. Instead of labouring on the farm they wasted their time in idly wishing that fortune had made them, in lieu of healthy, honest sons of a farmer, the children of some rich magnifico, that so they might have passed their days in all the sports of the times, in jousting, hunting, and in studying the fashions of brave

apparel. They were of a humour at once impetuous and sulky, and would either idly mope about the farm, or violently abuse and ill-treat whomsoever accident might throw in their way. The old man was inly grieved at the wilfulness and disobedience of his sons, but, with his usual disposition, hoped that time might remedy the evil; and so, but rarely reproving them, they were left sole masters of their hours and actions.

One night, after supper, the brothers walked into the garden to give loose to their idle fancies, always yearning after matters visionary and improbable. It was a glorious night, the moon was at the full, and myriads of stars glowed in the deep blue firmament. The air stirred among the trees and flowers, wafting abroad their sweetness; the dew glittered on the leaves, and a deep-voiced nightingale, perched in a citron tree, poured forth a torrent of song upon the air. It was an hour for good thoughts and holy aspirations. Giulio threw himself upon a bank, and, after gazing with intentness at the sky, exclaimed:—

"Would that I had fields ample as the heavens above us!"

"I would," rejoined Ippolito, "I had as many sheep as there are stars."

"And what," asked Giulio, with a sarcastic smile, "would your wisdom do with them?"

"Marry," replied Ippolito, "I would pasture them in your sageship's fields."

"What!" exclained Giulio, suddenly raising himself upon his elbow, and looking with an eye of fire upon his brother; "whether I would or not?"

"Truly, ay," said Ippolito, with a stubborn significance of manner.

"Have a care," cried Giulio, "have a care, Ippolito; do not thwart me. Am I not your elder brother?"

"Yes; and marry, what of that? Though you came first

into the world, I trow you left some manhood for him who followed after."

"You do not mean to insist that, despite my will, despite the determination of your elder brother, you will pasture your sheep in my grounds?"

"In truth but I do."

"And that," rejoined Giulio, his cheek flushing, and his lip tremulous, "and that without fee or recompense?"

"Assuredly."

Giulio leaped to his feet, and, dashing his clenched hand against a tree, with a face full of passion, and in a voice made terrible by rage, he screamed, rather than said, "By the Blessed Virgin but you do not!"

"And by St Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins I protest I will." This was uttered by Ippolito in a tone of banter and bravado that for a moment made the excited frame of Giulio quiver from head to foot. He gazed at the features of Ippolito, all drawn into a sneer, and for a moment gnashed his teeth. He was hastily approaching the scoffer, when, by an apparently strong effort, he arrested himself, and, turning upon his heel, struck hastily down another path, where he might be seen pacing with short, quick steps, whilst Ippolito, leaning against a tree, carelessly sang a few lines of a serenata. This indifference was too much for Giulio; he stopped short, turned, and then rapidly came up to Ippolito, and with a manner of attempted tranquillity, said, "Ippolito, I do not wish to quarrel with you; I am your elder brother; then give up the point."

"Not I," replied Ippolito, with the same immovable smile.

"What, then, you are determined that your sheep shall, in very despite of me, pasture in my fields?"

"They shall."

"Villain!" raved Giulio; and ere the word was well uttered he had dashed his clenched hand in his brother's

face. Ippolito sprang like a wild beast at Giulio, and for a moment they stood with a hand at each other's throat, and their eyes, in the words of the Psalmist, were "whetted" on one another. They stood but to gain breath, then grappled closer. Ippolito threw his brother to the earth, huddling his knees upon him, furious blows were exchanged, but scarce a sound was uttered, save at intervals a blasphemous oath or a half-strangled groan. Giulio was completely overpowered by the superior strength and cooler temper of his brother; but, lying prostrate and conquered, his hands pinioned to his breast, and Ippolito glaring at him with malicious triumph, he cursed and spat at him. Ippolito removed his hand from his brother's throat, and ere his pulse could beat, Giulio's poniard was in his brother's heart. He gave a loud shriek, and fell a streaming corpse upon his murderer. The father, roused by the sound, came hurrying to the garden; Giulio, leaping from under the dead body, rushed by the old man, who was all too speedily bending over his murdered child. From that hour hope and tranquillity forsook the father; he became a brain-sick, querulous creature, and in a few months died almost an idiot. Guilio joined a party of robbers, and, after a brief but dark career of crime, was shot by the sbirri.

Ye who would build castles in the air—who would slay your hours with foolish and unprofitable longings—ponder on the visionary fields, the ideal sheep of Giulio and Ippolito.

THE TAPESTRY WEAVER OF BEAUVAIS

The oldest people of Beauvais remembered Schatten the tapestry weaver. Some vowed he was threescore, some a hundred years old; and ever as the subject was touched upon, Schatten would widen his huge mouth, and cry with a low chuckle, "Ay, ay, a thousand—more or less. I shall live to see wrinkles in the sun." None knew from what stock he sprang—from what land he came. Such questions he would ever parry with some extravagance. "I was born of felspar and quartz, and my home was the Hartz Mountains when they were no bigger than mole-hills." And thus Schatten lived on. He saw the child rise into manhood—wed—become a parent—a grey-headed man—a corpse; and so with the child's child, and yet no change came upon Schatten. He stood, a flinty image gazing on dying generations.

A hovel in an obscure part of Beauvais was the dwelling of the weaver. There was his tapestry loom; and there, day after day, and night after night, would he work, at times droning a song to cheer what seemed the monotony of an eternal employment. Notwithstanding the inexplicable mystery about the man, he was, on the whole, a favourite with his fellow-townsmen. There was something so meek

in his demeanour, so placid, so unassuming, and his speech was so soft and gentle, that although his name had been mingled in strange recitals, he had never been molested, but, on the contrary, was generally considered a harmless, well-meaning creature ; one who, far from sneering at the pleasures of youth, looked upon them with seeming satisfaction. No one more frequently witnessed the bacchanal revelries of the topers of Beauvais ; for, though Schatten was no drinker himself, he beheld with unaffected pleasure the loose jollity of others. The like at feasts : although he was temperate as a chameleon, he would most readily carve huge collops for others. He seemed to hold in peculiar admiration a purple, bloated face and swagging paunch, though his own sharp visage was as yellow as saffron, and his figure lank as a thread-paper. This urbanity towards the failings of others was, it will be conceded, the secret of his popularity. Though he himself abstained from all animal indulgence, he not only did not gloomily lecture on the lawlessness of appetite, but, on the contrary, smiled on its achievements. This charity hath served many besides old Schatten.

But there was another circumstance that greatly assisted the goodly reputation of the weaver : it was the character of his many visitors and pupils. His hovel was the resort of the loveliest girls —the most beautiful youths, not only of the town of Beauvais, but from the great city itself—from elegant, voluptuous Paris ; for even at the period of which we write it was distinguished for the refinement and luxuries of life.

Schatten, in his capacity of tapestry weaver, had pictures of every variety of subject ; and it was his good fortune that those professors who excelled in the beautiful art seemed by common consent to seek old Schatten, that he might immortalise their radiant sketches in his still more exquisite tapestry. There was no subject which painting could

portray, no imagination which it could robe in life and colour, that was not ready for the loom of Schatten. If a battle were the theme, there might be seen contending heroes, with stern rapture in their faces, glory about their heads—their every limb glowing as with Mars' own fire—their swords like sunbeams, and the smoking blood more like libations to purple Liber, than torrents in which the human life gushed forth. Thus a battle woven by old Schatten was a grand and glorious thing—each combatant was an excited god; whilst the drained and pallid carcass—the dreadful wounds, with jagged and gaping mouths—the rigid muscle straining against death—the fixed and stone-like eye, and clotted hair—all the gross, substantial horrors of systematic slaughter, were thrown into the shade: they were not to expose that common liar—Glory. If the subject were beauty, there might be seen—as erst was chosen by the antique master—one charm from twenty different faces, making a miracle of perfection. All that was voluptuous and entrancing shone in the dewy light of woman's eye; there was an eternal youth in her red lip, a tenderness in her warm cheek: too pure for the earth, too exquisitely fragile, she seemed of a sisterhood 'twixt humanity and angels. The same masterly hand was displayed though the subject was the banquet of the glutton—the supper was still spread "in the Apollo." The same power shown in the golden heaps of the miser: the food, the wine, seemed ambrosia and nectar, bestowing immortality on the lip that tasted: the gold glittered like something dropped from the skies, to be worn as amulets against calamity.

A man so potent in his handicraft as Schatten might have surrounded himself with all the symbols of wealth; and, had he been ambitious, have successfully contended for the highest honours of citizenship. But, it was plain, he valued gold as ashes; and for the trappings of state and place, the

most regal shows, the pomp and blazonry of kings, were with him matter for a jest.

"Alack!" cried Michel Sous, a withered money-scrivener of Beauvais—"I hear 't was a brave sight; and plague on my shanks! I have missed it. Which way went the procession?" The man of bonds and pieces remained gaping for the answer of the tapestry weaver, who stood, cross-legged, leaning on his staff, with a face immovable as granite. It was a day of triumph, a time of holiday, and Michel had for once quitted his bags and desk to sun himself in the glory of his fellow-townsmen. "Weaver, I say, which way went the procession, and where shall I find it?"

"It went, after some turnings, into the churchyard. Take up a handful of mould, and, in truth, you clutch a part of what you seek."

"Why, thou art drunk, merry, or mad! The churchyard and mould! I ask you where went, where *is*, the procession?"

"Where I tell you. I saw it pass by me, and after some windings and shiftings, I saw each brave puppet—that strutted as though the angels were looking at it—I saw it shrink, and bend, and totter, and the yellowness of age crept over it, and its eye faded, and its hair whitened, and it crawled into the earth as the fox slinks beneath his cover. The trumpets lay dumb and cankering in the soil—the rustling flags dropped tinder at the breeze—the rust-eaten sword crumbled beneath the mattock of the digger, and rank grass grows above the pomp of the last hour."

"Why, Schatten, thou art dreaming. Blessed St Mary! thou surely didst not see the sight, else thou hadst told me a truer story of its progress."

"Not so: trust me, I saw the revel—but I beheld it from the pinnacle of time; and I tell you again, all the men who passed me I watched into the churchyard. Their haughty

eyes—their trophies, flags, and clamorous pipes—I say to you, they are dust! The shout of triumph hath died in the distance, and *hic jacet* is now the only tongue."

"So, so—a riddle," crowed the scrivener; and he hobbled on to seek a less perplexing respondent.

Such were, at times, the answers of old Schatten, who, when he pleased, could be as grave and oracular as a father confessor. Such were his reflections on pageants which, to many thoughtless and happy minds, were the symbols of all earthly greatness. It was his pastime to analyse appearance—to unravel the glossy web of policy—to unfold the swathings of vain pomp and ceremony, and point to the foul mummy they encased. Yet would he vary this custom with smiles and laughter, and witty sayings, which gave a savour to the wine they honoured. He would, with his thin voice troll a song in praise of beauty, and, with quick conceits, prick on lusty youth to deeds of jollity and wild adventure; nay, he would often mingle in the revelry. Many a time have the townsfolk of Beauvais laughed at the gambols of old Schatten, who, pranked in his best, would trip it with some blue-eyed fair one, who, seemingly unconscious of the deformity of her partner, would glide through the dance all smiles and sweetness, as though mortal youth were wedded to immortality, and wrinkles and grey hairs were not the inheritance of the children of earth. Alas! but a few months, or weeks, and the poor maiden—she who seemed the embodied principle of beauty and motion—was as the "clods of the valley," a mass of blank insensibility.

Various were the ways by which old Schatten had insinuated himself into the good graces of the people of Beauvais. To please them he would, when in the humour, act twenty different parts—now he would be a learned doctor, and now a mountebank; at times he would utter the wisdom of sages—at times play a hundred antic tricks, making his audience shout with merriment. For one long

winter did Schatten profoundly lecture upon laurels, crowns, swords, and money-bags; and, like a skilful chemist, would he analyse their component parts.

"This," cried Schatten, producing a semblance of the wreath, "this is the laurel crown of one of the Cæsars. How fresh and green the leaves remain! Ha! there is no such preservative as innocent blood—it embalms the names of mighty potentates, who else had never been heard of: steeped in it, deformity becomes loveliness—fame colours her most lasting pictures with its paint! The fields that grew this branch were richly manured: tens of thousands of hearts lay rotting there; the light of thousands of eyes was quenched; palaces and hovels, in undistinguished heaps, were strewn about the soil; there lay the hoary and the unborn; the murdered wife and the outraged virgin—and showers of tears falling on this garden of agony and horror, it was miraculously fertile—for low! it gave forth this one branch, to deck the forehead of one man! In the veins that seam its leaves are the heart strings of murdered nations; it is the plant of fire and blood, reaped by the sword!—Such is the conqueror's laurel.

"And here is the despot's diadem!—Many a time, like glowing iron, hath it seared the brows it circled. Of what is it composed? What wonderful ingredients meet in this quintessence of worldly wealth? See, the passions and the feelings that helped to make it still haunt their handiwork. Their shadows live in its glittering metal and its flashing gems. Full-blooded power, with a demon's eye, glares from this ruby—leprous fear trembles in these pearls—in every diamond, care or compunction weeps a tear! Throughout the gold I see a thousand forms, dawning and fading like hues in heated steel:—there, fancy detects the assassin with his knife;—there, the bondsman snaps his chain;—there, is the headsman;—there, the civil war! These are the shades that haunt the despot's crown; that wear him

waking, and screech to him in his sleep. A nation's groan is pent up in its round. It is a living thing that eats into the brain of the possessor, making him mad and drunk for blood and power!

"The miser's money-bag!—Another monster—all throat. Could its owner have put the sun itself within this bag, the world for him had been in darkness—perpetual night had cast a pall upon creation—the fruits of earth had withered in the bud, and want and misery been universal; whilst he, the thrifty villain! smugly lived in bloom, and in his very baseness found felicity! And yet, what was the worth of all this bag contained? Though it was stuffed with wealth, it was hung about with fears. As its owner slid his palm into the heap, he would start as though he felt the hand of death were hidden there to grasp him. He was almost blind within a world of beauty. His eye saw no images save those painted by gold; his ears heard not, save when the metal tinkled; his tongue was dumb, if it spoke not of wealth; the glittering pieces were to him the children of his heart and soul—dull offspring of the foulest appetites; yet he hugged them to his bosom—he hugged them, and in his dying hour they turned to snakes, and stung him in the embrace! This is the miser's money-bag—the abode of reptiles, the sepulchre of the soul!

"The sword!—Ceremony sanctifies it. Some kingly words are spoken—a trumpet is blown; straightway the sword is *ennobled!*

"The lawyer's gown!—the masquerading dress of common sense. There is a living instinct in its web: let golden villainy come under it, and with a thought it flows and spreads, and gives an ample shelter to the thing it covers; let poor knavery seek it, and it shrinks and curtains up, and leaves the trembling victim naked to the court!"

Thus, in his graver moments, would old Schatten preach to his hearers; then, with a thought, he would break from

the solemn discourse, and make merriment with the self-same objects. Thus, like a skilful juggler, he would hold the conqueror's laurel, that hardy plant, to his lips, and with a puff blow it into dust; he would change the tiara into a huge snake, monstrous and ugly, and make the beholders start at its contortions. The long purse he would ravel into a shroud; he would melt the sword into drops of blood, and turn the lawyer's gown into a net of steel. Whilst these tricks made him a favourite with the young and gay, his learning, and the thousand stories he had of men of all ages and of all ranks, rendered him an oracle of wisdom to the studious. It was observed that Schatten, whilst narrating any history, always spoke as though he had been an eye-witness of the circumstance he detailed; nay, as though he had known their most secret thoughts.

. . . . . .

And who is Schatten, whose history is yet unfinished? Who is this mysterious Weaver, whose deeds, if chronicled, would fill thousands of folios? He is everywhere about us: in the solitude of our chamber, in the press and throng of the street, in the wilderness and in the city.

—"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle."

THE WINE CELLAR

A "MORALITY"

Stephen Curlew was a thrifty goldsmith in the reign of the Second Charles. His shop was a mine of metal: he worked for the Court, although, we fear, his name is not to be found in any record in the State-Paper Office. Stephen was a bachelor, and, what is strange, he never felt—that is, he never complained of—his loneliness. His chased ewers, his embossed goblets, his gold in bars, were to him wife and children. Midas was his only kinsman. He would creep among his treasures, like an old grey rat, and rub his hands, and smile, as if communing with the wealth about him. He had so long hugged gold to his heart that it beat for nothing else. Stephen was a practical philosopher; for he would meekly take the order—nay, consult the caprice—of the veriest popinjay with the humility of a pauper, when, at a word, he might have out-blazoned lords and earls. If this be not real philosophy, thought Stephen, as he walked slipshod at the heels of his customers, what is?

Stephen was a man of temperance; he was content to see venison carved on his hunting-cups; he cared not to have it in his larder. His eyes would melt at clustering grapes

chased on banquet goblets, but no drop of the living juice passed the goldsmith's lips. Stephen only gave audience to Bacchus when introduced by Plutus. Such was the frugality of Stephen to his sixty-fifth year; and then, or his name had not been eternised in this our page, temptation fell upon him.

It was eight o'clock on a raw spring evening, and Stephen sat alone in his back-room. There was no more fire upon the hearth than might have lain in a tinder-box, but Stephen held his parchment hands above it, and would not be cold. A small silver lamp, with a short wick—for the keen observation of Stephen had taught him the scientific truth, that the less the wick, the less the waste of oil—glowed, a yellow speck in the darkness. On the table lay a book, a treatise on precious stones; and on Stephen's knee, *Hermes, the True Philosopher*. Stephen was startled from a waking dream by a loud and hasty knocking at the door. Mike, the boy, was out; but it could not be he. Stephen took up the lamp, and was creeping to the door, when his eye caught the silver, and he again placed it upon the table, and felt his way through the shop. Unbolting the five bolts of the door, but keeping fast the chain, Stephen demanded "who was there?"

"I bear a commission from Sir William Brouncker, and I'm in haste."

"Stay you a minute—but a minute," and Stephen hurried back for the lamp, then hastily returned, opened the door, and the visitor passed the threshold.

"'Tis not Charles!" cried Stephen, alarmed at his mistake, for he believed he had heard the voice of Sir William's man.

"No matter for that, Stephen; you work for men, and not for Christian names. Come, I have a job for you"; and the visitor, with the easy, assured air of a gallant, lounged into the back-parlour, followed by the tremulous Stephen.

"Sir William——" began the goldsmith.

"He bade me use his name; the work I'd have you do is for myself. Fear not: here's money in advance," and the stranger plucked from his pocket a purse, which in its ample length lay like a bloated snake upon the table.

Stephen smiled, and said, "Your business, sir?"

"See here," and the stranger moved the lamp immediately between them, when, for the first time, Stephen clearly saw the countenance of his customer. His face was red as brick, and his eyes looked deep as the sea, and glowed with good humour. His mouth was large and frank, and his voice came as from the well of truth. His hair fell in curls behind his ears, and his moustache, black as coal, made a perfect crescent on his lip, the points upwards. Other men may be merely good fellows, the stranger seemed the best. "See here," he repeated, and produced a drawing on a small piece of paper, "can you cut me this in a seal ring?"

"Humph!" and Stephen put on his spectacles; "the subject is——"

"Bacchus squeezing grape-juice into the cup of Death," said the stranger.

"An odd conceit," cried the goldsmith.

"We all have our whims, or woe to the sellers," said the customer. "Well, can it be done?"

"Surely, sir, surely. On what shall it be cut?"

"An emerald, nothing less. It is the drinker's stone. In a week, Master Curlew?"

"This day week, sir, if I live in health."

The day came. Stephen was a tradesman of his word, and the stranger sat in the back-parlour, looking curiously into the ring.

"*Per Bacco!* Rarely done. Why, Master Curlew, thou hast caught the very chops of glorious Liber, his swimming eyes, and blessed mouth. Ha! ha! thou hast put thy

heart into the work, Master Curlew; and how cunningly hast thou all but hid the dart of death behind the thyrsus of the god! How his life-giving hand clutches the pulpy cluster, and with what a gush comes down the purple rain, plashing into rubies in the cup of Mors!"

"It was my wish to satisfy, most noble sir," said Stephen, meekly, somewhat confounded by the loud praises of the speaker.

"May you never be choked with a grape-stone, Master Curlew, for this goodly work. Ha!" and the speaker looked archly at the withered goldsmith; "it hath cost thee many a headache ere thou couldst do this."

"If I may say it, I have laboured hard at the craft—have been a thrifty, sober man," said Stephen.

"Sober! Ha! ha! ha!" shouted the speaker, and his face glowed redder, and his eyes melted; "sober! why, thou wast begot in a wine cask, and suckled by a bottle, or thou hadst never done this. By the thigh of Jupiter! he who touched this," and the stranger held up the ring to his eye, and laughed again, "he who touched this hath never known water. Tut! man, were I to pink thee with a sword thou'dst bleed wine!"

"I," cried Stephen, "I bleed," and he glanced fearfully towards the door, and then at the stranger, who continued to look at the ring.

"The skin of the sorriest goat shall sometimes hold the choicest liquor," said the stranger, looking into the dry face of the goldsmith. "Come, confess, art thou not a sly roysterer? Or art thou a hermit over thy drops, and dost count flasks alone? Ay! ay! well, to thy cellar, man; and—yes—thine arms are long enough—bring up ten bottles of thy choicest Malaga."

"I!—my cellar!—Malaga!" stammered Stephen.

"Surely thou hast a cellar?" and the stranger put his hat upon the table with the air of a man set in for a carouse.

"For forty years, but it hath never known wine," cried the goldsmith. "I—I have never known wine." The stranger said nothing; but, turning full upon Stephen, and, placing his hands upon his knees, he blew out his flushing cheeks like a bagpipe, and sat with his eyes blazing upon the heretic. "No, never!" gasped Stephen, terrified, for a sense of his wickedness began to possess him.

"And thou dost repent?" asked the stranger, with a touch of mercy towards the sinner.

"I—humph! I'm a poor man," cried Curlew; "yes, though I'm a goldsmith, and seem rich, I—I'm poor! poor!"

"Well, 'tis lucky I come provided," and the stranger placed upon the table a couple of flasks. Whether he took them from under his cloak, or evoked them through the floor, Stephen knew not; but he started at them as they stood rebukingly upon his table, as if they had been two sheeted ghosts. "Come, glasses," cried the giver of the wine.

"Glasses!" echoed Stephen, "in my house!"

"Right, glasses! No—cups, and let them be gold ones!" and the bacchanal, for it was plain he was such, waved his arm with an authority which Stephen attempted not to dispute, but rose and hobbled into the shop, and returned with two cups just as the first cork was drawn. "Come, there's sunlight in that, eh?" cried the stranger, as he poured the wine into the vessels. "So, thou hast never drunk wine? Well, here's to the baptism of thy heart!" And the stranger emptied the cup, and his lips smacked like a whip.

And Stephen Curlew tasted the wine, and looked around, below, above; and the oaken wainscot did not split in twain, nor did the floor yawn, nor the ceiling gape. Stephen tasted a second time; thrice did he drink, and he licked his mouth as a cat licks the cream from her whiskers, and, putting his left hand upon his belly, softly sighed.

"Ha! ha! another cup! I know thou wilt," and Stephen took another, and another; and the two flasks were in brief time emptied. They were, however, speedily followed by two more, placed by the stranger on the table, Stephen opening his eyes and mouth at their mysterious appearance. The contents of these were duly swallowed, and lo! another two stood before the goldsmith, or, as he then thought, four.

"There never was such a Bacchus!" cried Stephen's customer, eyeing the ring. "Why, a man may see his stomach fairly heave, and his cheek ripen with wine: yet, till this night, thou hadst never tasted the juice! What—what could have taught thee to carve the god so capitally?"

"Instinct—instinct," called out the goldsmith, his lips turned to clay by too much wine.

"And yet," said the stranger, "I care not so much for—— How old art thou, Stephen?"

"Sixty-five," and Stephen hiccupped.

"I care not so much for thy Death, Stephen; instinct should have made thee a better hand at Death."

"'Tis a good Death," cried the goldsmith, with unusual boldness, "a most sweet Death."

"'Tis too broad—the skeleton of an alderman with the flesh dried upon him. He hath not the true desolation, the ghastly nothingness, of the big bugbear. No matter; I'm content; but this I'll say, though thou hast shown thyself a professor at Bacchus, thou art yet but a poor apprentice at Death."

Stephen Curlew answered not with words, but he snored very audibly. How long he slept he could not well discover, but when he awoke he found himself alone; no, not alone, there stood upon the table an unopened flask of wine. In a moment the mystery broke upon him—and he sprang to his feet with a shriek, and rushed into the shop. No—he had not been drugged by thieves—all was as it should be.

The stranger, like an honest and courteous man, had taken but his own ; and, without disturbing the sleeper, had quitted the house. And Stephen Curlew, the wine glowing in his heart—yea, down to his very nails, stood and smiled at the unopened flask before him.

Stephen continued to eye the flask ; and though its donor had shared with him he knew not how many bottles, Stephen was resolved that not one drop of the luscious juice before him should wet an alien throat. But how—where to secure it? For, in the new passion which seized upon the goldsmith, the one flask seemed to him more precious than the costly treasure in his shop—a thing to be guarded with more scrupulous affection—more jealous love. In what nook of his house to hide the glorious wealth—what corner, where it might escape the profane glances and itching fingers of his workmen? The thought fell in a golden flash upon him—the cellar—ay, the cellar! Who of his household ever thought of approaching the cellar? Stephen seized the flask and lamp, and paused. The cellar had no lock! No matter ; he had a bag of three-inch nails and a stout hammer.

The next morning neighbours met at the closed door and windows of the goldsmith, and knocked and shouted, shouted and knocked. They were, however, reduced to a crowbar, and, at length, burst into the house. Every place was searched, but there was nowhere visible old Stephen Curlew. Days passed on, and strange stories filled the ears of men. One neighbour vowed that he had had a dream or a vision, he knew not which, wherein he saw the goldsmith whirled down the Strand in a chariot drawn by a lion and a tiger, and driven by a half-naked young man, wearing a panther skin, and on his head vine-leaves and ivy. An old woman swore that she had seen Stephen carried away by a dozen devils (very much in liquor), with red faces and

goat legs. However, in less than a month, the goldsmith's nephew, a scrivener's clerk, took possession of Curlew's wealth, and became a new-made butterfly with golden wings. As for Stephen, after various speculations, it was concluded, to the satisfaction of all parties, that he must have been carried away by Satan himself, and the nephew cared not to combat popular opinions. But such, in truth, was not the end of the goldsmith. Hear it.

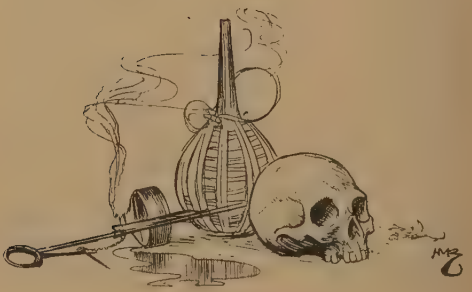
Stephen, possessed by the thought of the cellar, with the one flask, a lamp, nails, and hammer, proceeded to the sacred crypt. He arrived in the vault, and having kissed the flask, reverently put it down, and straightway addressed himself to the work. Closing the door, he drove the first nail, the second, third; and borrowing new strength from the greatness of his purpose, he struck each nail upon the head with the force and precision of a Cyclops, burying it deep in the oak. With this new-found might he drove eleven nails; the twelfth was between his thumb and finger, when looking round—oh! sad mishap, heavy mischance! awful error!—he had driven the nails from the wrong side! In a word—and we tremble while we write it—he had nailed himself in! There he stood, and there stood the flask. He gasped with horror; his foot stumbled, struck the lamp, it fell over, and the light went out.

Shall we write further on the agony of Stephen Curlew? Shall we describe how he clawed and struck at the door, now in the hope to wrench a nail, and now to alarm the breathing men above? No; we will not dwell upon the horror; it is enough that the fate of the goldsmith was dimly shadowed forth in the following paragraph of last Saturday:—

"Some labourers, digging a foundation near"—no, we will not name the place, for the family of the Curlews is not yet extinct, and there may be descendants in the neighbour-

hood—"near——, found a skeleton. A hammer was beside it, with several long nails: a small wine flask was also found near the remains, which, it is considered, could not have been in the vault in which they were discovered less than a century and three-quarters!"

Oh, ye heads of families! and oh, ye thrifty, middle-aged bachelors, boarding with families, or growing mouldy by yourselves, never, while ye live, forget the terrible end of Stephen Curlew. And oh, ye heads of families—and oh, ye aforesaid bachelors, albeit ye have only one bottle left, never, NEVER NAIL UP THE WINE CELLAR!



RECOLLECTIONS OF GUY FAWKES

"When a man has once been very famous for jests and merry adventures, he is made to adopt all the jests that want a father, and many times such as are unworthy of him."—Motteux's *Life of Rabelais*.

At midnight, on the fifth of November, in the year of grace one thousand six hundred and five, Guido Fawkes, "gentleman," was discovered, "booted and spurred," in the vicinity of St Stephen's Chapel, having on his person "three matches, a tinder-box, and a dark lantern"; and purposing by means of gunpowder to blow up, says King James, "the whole nobility, the most part of the knights and gentry, besides the whole judges of the land, with *most of the lawyers* and the whole clerks!" For the one indiscretion Guido Fawkes forfeited his gentility, and became a proverb of wickedness. In boyhood we looked upon Guido Fawkes, gentleman, as one little lower than the devil; he had four horns, and a dozen tails. "Years that bring the philosophic mind" have divested him of these excrescences and appendages, and Guido Fawkes now appears to matured charities merely a person of a singularly eccentric disposition.

Some five and twenty years ago it was the patriotic

custom of the authorities of an Isle of Sheppy dockyard to bestow upon their apprentices a few waggon-loads of resinous timber, that a bonfire worthy of the cause it celebrated might be kindled from the public purse—that the effigy of the arch-fiend Guy might be consumed in a fire three times hotter than the fire of a furnace. Such fierce liberality was not lost upon the townspeople; their ardour in the burning business smouldered not; every man subscribed his plank or log; and, from the commissioner in his uniform, to Bobby in his pinafore, the fifth of November glowed, in the calendar of their minds, a pillar of fire. For a month before that day, the coming anniversary busied the thoughts of boyish executioners, resolved to show their patriotism in the appointments of the Guy—in the grotesque iniquity of his face—in the cumbrous state of his huge arm-chair. To beg clothes from door to door was the business of every lover of Church and State. To ask for a coat—a pair of breeches—a shirt (the frill could be made of paper)—hose and hat, was not mendicity, but the fulfilment of a high social duty.

Guy Fawkes would at length be dressed. A philosopher might have found good matter in his eleemosynary suit. In the coat of the blood-thirsty wretch he might have recognised the habit of Scum, the slop-seller, a quiet trader afloat of twenty thousand pounds—in the vest of the villainous ruffian the discarded waistcoat of Smallgrog, the honest landlord of a little house for sailors—in the stockings of the atrocious miscreant the hose of the equitable Weevil, biscuit-contractor to his Majesty's fleet—whilst for the leather of the fiend-like effigy, Guy Fawkes was to be exhibited, and afterwards burnt in, the broad-toed shoes of that best of men, Trap, the town attorney.

The chair, too, in which Guy Fawkes sat, might it not have some day enshrined a justice of the peace? and the lantern fixed in the hand of the diabolical, lynx-eyed

monster, might it not have been the property of the most amiable and most somnolent of all the Blue Town watchmen? A mask was fixed upon the effigy, or the lump of clay kneaded into human features, and horribly or delicately expressed, according to the benevolent art of the makers! —might not the same visor have been worn by a perfect gentleman, with considerable advantage, at a masquerade? —might not the clay nose and mouth of the loathsome traitor have borne an accidental likeness to the very pink of patriots? Let philosophy ponder well on Guy Fawkes.

We will now attempt our childish recollections of the great Guy. We have waked at midnight, perhaps dreaming of the bonfire about to blaze, and thinking we heard the distant chorus sounding to the advent of the Mighty Terror. No, it was the sea booming across the marsh, the wind rising or falling. There was nothing for it but to go to sleep and dream of unextinguishable squibs and crackers. At length four o'clock arrives; the cocks crow—the boys can't be long now. There—hark!—how the chant comes up the street, like one voice—the voice of a solitary droning witch! We lie breathless, and shape to ourselves Guy Fawkes in the dark! Our hearts beat quicker and quicker as the chant becomes louder; and we sit up in bed, as the boys approach the door, and, oh! how we wish to be with them! There—there they are in full chorus! Hark:—

> "The fifth of November, as I can remember,
> Is gunpowder treason and plot,
> I know no reason, why gunpowder treason
> Should ever be forgot."

We feel an unutterable pang, for loudest among the loud, we hear the shrill voice of Jack Tarleton. "Ha!" we sigh, "*his* mother lets *him* out." The bitterness passes away with the—

> "Hallo, boys! Hallo, boys! make a round ring,
> Hallo, boys! Hallo, boys! God save the king!"

And now the procession moves on, and the voices die in the distance, and we feel we are left alone; and, in a few minutes, we hear new revellers, rejoicing in the captivity of a suit of clothes stuffed with hay, and called Guy Fawkes. Guy Fawkes! Guy Fawkes! who—what *is* Guy Fawkes? We had been told that he had been caught with a lantern, tinder-box and matches, ready to blow up thousands of barrels of gunpowder, and so to destroy the king, bishops, and members of Parliament. It must be shocking—very shocking; still, we could not perfectly envisage the atrocity—we could not make out the full horror. We had the undefined sense of the greatness of a king, though we hardly dared to hope we should ever see one. We had a less remote notion of the nature of a bishop, having been helped somewhat in our speculations by the person of the curate at the garrison church. "Curates may come to be bishops, only bishops are very much greater; and curates have nothing upon their heads, whereas certain bishops might wear mitres." On learning this we thought that bishops were merely full-grown curates; in the same way that we

had seen Poland hens with their topknots of feathers only the spring before bare-headed little chicks. It was thus, in the irreverence of childhood, we disposed of the whole bench of bishops. But now came we to the difficulty—what, what could be a member of Parliament? Was it a living thing? If so, had it a voice? Could it speak? Could it sit? Could it say yes and no? Could it walk? Could it turn? Or was it merely an image? Was it pulled by wires, like sister Jenny's doll? We had been told that members of Parliament made laws. What *were* laws? Were they the lions and unicorns on the king's arms? Were they a better sort of cake, too dear for everybody to buy? Little boys ate parliament-cakes—were law-cakes for men? If so, were they gilt or plain?—with comfits or without?

It is no matter, we thought, being unable to satisfy ourselves: it is no matter. Guy Fawkes—that shadowy, terrible mystery—had once lived and tried to kill the king, the full-grown curates, and those undivined riddles—members of Parliament. We again went to our first question. Who *was* Guy Fawkes? Did he have a father and mother? Was Guy Fawkes ever a little boy? and did he fly a kite and play at marbles? If so, how could he have ever thought it worth his while to trouble himself with other matters? There was something terrifying in the idea of having played with Guy Fawkes. We fancied him at taw—we saw him *knuckle down*. No—it could not be; the imagination of the child could not dwell upon such an impossibility. Guy Fawkes a boy!—a baby! now shaking a rattle—now murmuring as he fed, his mother smiling down upon him! No, no—it was impossible; Guy Fawkes was never born—he was from the first a man—he never could have been a baby. He seemed to us a part of the things that had always been, and always would be—a piece of grim eternity; a principle of everlasting wickedness.

Is it in childhood alone—is it only in the dim imaginings of infancy—in the wandering guesses of babyhood, that we manifest this ignorance? When the full-grown thief is hanged, do we not sometimes forget that he was the child of misery and vice—born for the gallows—nursed for the halter? Did we legislate a little more for the cradle, might we not be spared some pains for the hulks?

And then we had been told that Guy Fawkes came from Spain. Where was Spain? Was it a million miles away, and what distance was a million miles? Were there little boys in Spain, or were they all like Guy Fawkes? How strange, and yet how delightful to us did it seem to feel that we were a part of the wonderful things about us! To be at all upon this world—to be one at the great *show* of men and women—to feel that when we grew bigger we should know everything of kings, bishops, members of Parliament, and Guy Fawkes! What a golden glory hung about the undiscovered!

And Guy Fawkes, we had heard, had his head cut off, and his body cut into quarters! Could this be true? Could men do to men what we had seen Fulk the butcher do to sheep? How much, we thought, had little boys to grow out of before they could agree to this! And then, when done, what was the good of it—what *could* be the good of it? Was Guy Fawkes eaten—if not, *why* cut him up?

Had Guy Fawkes a wife, and little boys and girls? Did he love his children, and buy them toys and apples—or, like Sawney Bean, did he devour them? Did Guy Fawkes say his prayers?

Had Guy Fawkes a friend? Did he ever laugh—did he ever tell a droll story? Did Guy Fawkes ever sing a song? Like Frampton, the Blue Town Barber, did Guy Fawkes ever get drunk? At length we put to ourselves the question of questions:—

Was there ever such a man as Guy Fawkes? Did Guy Fawkes ever live?

This query annoyed us with the doubt that we had been tricked into a hate, a fear, a loathing, a wonder—and a mixture of these passions and emotions, for a fib. We felt disappointed when we felt the reality of Guy Fawkes to be doubtful. We had heard of griffins and unicorns, of dragons that had eaten men like apples, and had then been told that there never had been any such thing. If we were not to believe in a dragon, why should we believe in Guy Fawkes? After all, was the whole story but make-game?

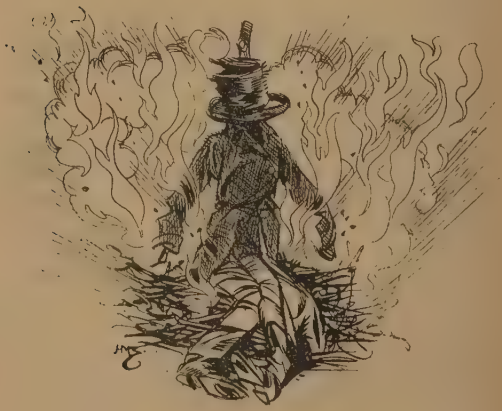
The child passively accepts a story of the future, he can bring his mind up to a thing promised, but wants faith in the past. The cause is obvious; he recollects few things gone, but is full of things to come. Hence Guy Fawkes was with us the ogre of a nursery; we could have readily believed, especially after the Story of Beauty and the Beast, that he married Goody Two Shoes, and was the father of Little Red Riding Hood.

But Guy Fawkes grows with us from boyhood to youth. He gets flesh and blood with every November; he is no longer the stuffed plaything of a schoolboy or the grotesque excuse for begging vagabonds, but the veritable Guy Fawkes, "gentléman." We see him, "Thomas Percy's alleged man," at the door of the vault, "booted and spurred"; we behold that "very tall and desperate fellow," lurking in the deep of night, with looks of deadly resolution, pounced upon by that vigilant gentleman of the privy-chamber, Sir Thomas Knevit! We go with Guido, "the new Mutius Scævola, born in England," before the council, where "he often smiles in scornful manner, not only avowing the fact, but repenting only, with the said Scævola, his failing in the execution thereof." We think of him "answering quickly to every man's objection, scoffing at any idle questions which

were propounded to him, and jesting with such as he thought had no authority to examine him." And then we think of the thanksgiving of the great James, who gave praise that, had the intent of the wicked prevailed, he should not have "died ingloriously in an ale-house, a stew, or such vile place," but with "the best and most honourable company."[1]

Guy Fawkes is, in our baby thoughts, a mysterious vision, one of the shadows of evil advancing on the path of childhood. We grow older, and the substances of evil come close upon us—we see their dark lantern, and snuff the brimstone.

[1] See "His Majesty's Speech concerning the Gunpowder Plot," etc., in the *Harleian Miscellany*.



ELIZABETH AND VICTORIA

Every generation compared to the age it immediately succeeds is but a further lapse from Paradise. Every grandfather is of necessity a wiser, kinder, nobler being that the grandson doomed to follow him—every grandmother chaster, gentler, more self-denying, more devoted to the beauty of goodness, than the giddy, vain, thoughtless creature, who in her time is sentenced to be grandmother to somebody, whose still increased defects will only serve to bring out the little lustre of the gentlewoman who preceded her. Man, undoubtedly, had at the first a fixed amount of goodness bestowed upon him ; but this goodness, by being passed from generation to generation, has, like a very handsome piece of coin, with arms and legend in bold relief, become so worn by continual transit, that it demands the greatest activity of faith to believe that which is now current in the world, to be any portion of the identical goodness with which the human race was originally endowed. Hapless creatures are we! Moral paupers of the nineteenth century, turning a shining cheek upon one another, and by the potent force of swagger, passing off our

thin, worn, illegible pieces of coin—how often, no thicker, no weightier than a spangle on a player's robe!—when our glorious ancestors, in the grandeur of their goodness, could ring down musical shekels! Nay, as we go back, we find the coin of excellence so heavy, so abounding, that how any man—Samson perhaps excepted—had strength enough to carry his own virtues about him, puzzles the effeminacy of present thought. Folks then were doubtless made grave, majestic in their movements by the very weight of their excellence. Whilst we, poor anatomies—skipjacks of the nineteenth century—we carry all our ready virtue in either corner of our waistcoat pocket, and from its very lightness, are unhappily enabled to act all sorts of unhallowed capers—to forget the true majesty of man in the antics of the mountebank. Forlorn degradation of the human race!

But the tears of the reader—for if he have a heart of flesh, it is by this time melting in his eyes—are not confidently demanded for only the one generation whereof (seeing he is our reader) he is certainly not the worst unit: but we here require of him to weep for posterity; yes, to subscribe a rivulet of tears for the generations to come. The coinage of the virtues at present in circulation among us is so thin, so defaced, so battered, so clipt, that it appears to us wholly impossible that any portion of the currency can descend a couple of generations lower. What, then, is to become of our grandchildren? Without one particle of golden truth and goodness left to them, for we cannot take into account the two or three pieces hoarded—as old ladies have hoarded silver pennies—what remains, what alternative for our descendants but to become a generation of coiners? Can any man withstand the terror of this picture, wherein all the world are shown as so many passers of pocket-pieces, lacquered over with something that seems like gold and silver, but which, indeed, is only seeming? A picture wherein he who is the ablest hypocrite—passing

off the greatest amount of false coin upon his neighbour —shall appear the most virtuous person! Is not this an appalling scene to contemplate? Yet, if there be any truth in a common theory, if there be any veracity in the words written in a thousand pages, uttered at every fireside, dropt in the casual meeting of man and man at door-steps, in by-lanes, highways, and market-places—the picture we have shadowed forth must become an iron present.

"We shall never see such times again!"

"The world isn't what it used to be."

"When I was a boy, things hadn't come to this pass."

"The world gets wickeder and wickeder."

Since the builders of Babel were scattered, these thoughts have been voiced in every tongue. From the very discontent and fantasticalness of his nature, man looks backward at the lost Paradise of another age. He affects to snuff the odour of its fruits and flowers, and with a melancholy shaking of the head, sees, or thinks he sees, the flashing of the fiery swords that guard them. And then, in the restlessness of his heart, in the peevishness and discontent of his soul, he says all sorts of bitter things of the generations he has fallen among; and, from the vanished glory of the past, predicts increasing darkness for the future. Happily, the prophesying cannot be true; and happily, too, for the condition of the prophet, he knows it will not. But then there is a sort of comfort in the waywardness of discontent; at times, a soothing music to the restlessness of the soul in the deep bass of hearty grumbling.

The ingratitude of the act is entirely forgotten in the pleasure. "Ha! those were the merry days—the golden times of England they were!" May not this be heard from the tradesman, the mechanic, as he is borne past Tilbury Fort, and the thoughts of Queen Elizabeth, of her

"golden days," ring in his brain; and living only in the nineteenth century, he has some vague, perplexing notion that he has missed an Eden, only by a hundred years or two? He thinks not—why should he?—of the luxury he now purchases for a shilling; a luxury, not compassable in those golden days by all the power and wealth of all the combining sovereigns of the earth, for he is a passenger of a Gravesend steamboat, the fare twelvepence.

We would not forget that wonder of Elizabeth's navy, the *Great Harry*. No; we would especially remember it, to compare the marvel, with all its terrors, to the agent of our day, which, wrought and directed from a few gallons of water, makes the winged ship but as a log—a dead leviathan upon the deep; which, in the certainty and intensity of its power of destruction must, in the fulness of time, make blood-spilling war bankrupt, preaching peace with all men, even from "the cannon's mouth."

We are, however, a degenerate race. In our maudlin sensibility, we have taken under our protection the very brutes of the earth—the fowls of the air—the fish of the sea. We have cast the majesty of the law around the asses of the reign of Victoria—have assured to live geese a property in their own feathers—have, with a touch of tenderness, denounced the wood-plugged claws of the lobsters of Billingsgate. We have a society, whose motto, spiritually, is—

> "Never to link our pleasure or our pride
> With suffering of the meanest thing that lives."

Very different, indeed, was the spirit of the English people, when their good and gracious Queen Elizabeth smiled sweetly upon bull dogs, and found national music in the growl, the roar, and the yell of a bear-garden; whereto, in all the courtesy of a nobler and more virtuous age, the sovereign led the French ambassador; that, as

chroniclers tell us, Monsieur might arrive at a sort of comparative knowledge of English bravery, judging the courage of the people by the stubborn daring of their dogs.

Then we had no Epsom, with its high moralities—no Ascot, with its splendour and wealth. Great, indeed, was the distance—deep the abyss—between the sovereign and the sovereign people.

And in those merry, golden days of good Queen Bess, rank was something; it had its brave outside, and preached its high prerogative from externals. The nobleman declared his nobility by his cloak, doublet and jerkin; by the plumes in his hat; by the jewels flashing in his shoes. Society, in all its gradations, was inexorably marked by the tailor and goldsmith.

But what is the tailor of the nineteenth century? What doth he for nobility? Alas! next to nothing. The gentleman is no longer the creature of the tailor's hands—the being of his shop-board. The gentleman must dress himself in ease, in affability, in the gentler and calmer courtesies of life, to make distinguishable the nobility of his nature from the homeliness, the vulgarity of the very man who, it may be, finds nobility in shoe-leather. Thus, gentility of blood, deprived by innovation of its external livery—denied the outward marks of supremacy—is thrown upon its bare self to make good its prerogative. Manner must now do the former duty of fine clothes.

State, too, was in the blessed times of Elizabeth a most majestic matter. The queen's carriage, unlike Victoria's, was a vehicle wondrous in the eyes of men as the chariot of King Pharaoh. Now, does every poor man keep his coach—price sixpence! How does the economy of luxury vulgarise the indulgence?

Travelling was then a grave and serious adventure. The horse-litter was certainly a more dignified means of transit

than the fuming, boiling, roaring steam-engine, that rushes forward with a man as though the human anatomy was no more than a woolpack. In the good old times of Queen Bess, a man might take his five long days and more for a hundred miles, putting up, after a week's jolting, at his hostelry, the Queen's Head of Islington, for one good night's rest, ere he should gird up his loins to enter London. Now is man taught to lose all respect for the hoariness of time by the quickness of motion. Now may he pass over two hundred miles in some seven or eight hours if he will, taking his first meal in the heart of Lancashire, and his good-night glass at a Geneva palace in London.

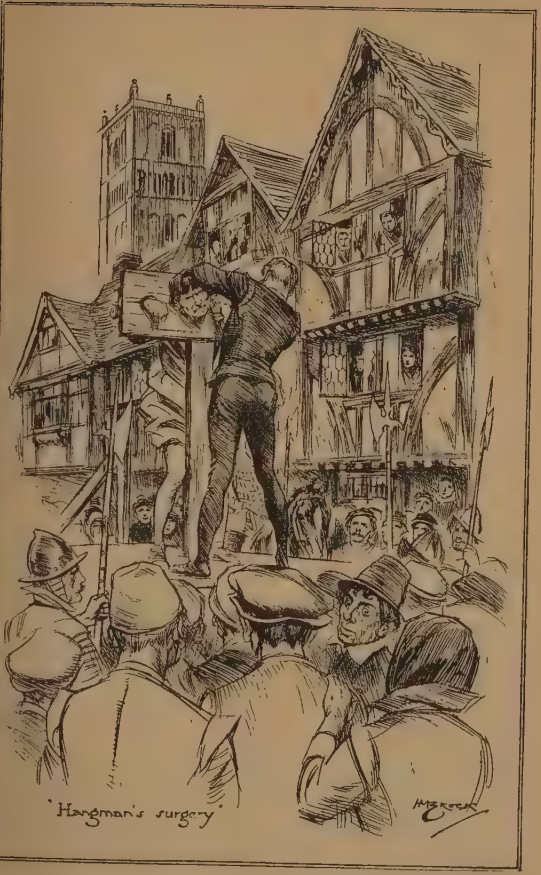
Is it wonderful that our present days should abound more in sinful levity than the days of the good Queen Elizabeth, seeing that we may, in the same space of time, crowd so much more iniquity? The truth is, science has thrown so many hours upon our hands, that we are compelled to kill them with all sorts of arrows—which, as moralists declare, have mortal poison at the barb, however gay and brilliant may be the feathers that carry it home. Dreadful will be the time when that subtle fiend, science, shall perform nearly all human drudgery; for then men in their very idleness will have nought else to destroy save their own souls; and the destruction will, of course, be quicker, and, to the father of all mischief, much more satisfactory.

Again, in the good times of Elizabeth, humanity was blessed with a modesty, a deference—in these days of bronze, to be vainly sought for—towards the awfulness of power, the grim majesty of authority. And if, indeed, it happened that some outrageous wretch, forgetful of the purpose of nature in creating him the Queen's liegeman, and therefore her property—if, for a moment, he should cease to remember the fealty which, by the principle of the divine right of kings, should be vital to him as the blood in his veins—why, was there not provided for him, by the benignity of custom and the law, a salutary remedy? If he advanced a new opinion, had he not ears wherewith, by hangman's surgery, he might be cured of such disease? If he took a mistaken view of the rights of his fellow-subjects, might he not be taught to consider them from a higher point of elevation, and so be instructed?

Booksellers, in the merry time of Elizabeth, were enabled to vindicate a higher claim to moral and physical daring than is permitted to them in these dull and drivelling days. He who published a book, questioning—though never so gently—the prerogative of her Majesty to do just as the spirit should move her, might have his right hand chopped off,

and afterwards—there have been examples of such devotion—wave his bloody stump, with a loyal shout of "God save the Queen!" But these were merry days—golden days—in which the royal prerogative was more majestic, more awful than in the nineteenth century. And wherefore? The reason is plain as the Queen's arms.

The king of beasts lives on flesh. His carnivorousness is one of the great elements of his Majesty. So was it in the times of Elizabeth, with the Queen's prerogative. It was for the most part fed upon flesh. It would be a curious and instructive calculation could we arrive at the precise number of noses, and arms, and hands, and human heads, and quarters of human carcases, which—during the merry, golden reign of Elizabeth, of those days we shall never see again—were required by law to keep strong and lusty the prerogative of the Virgin Queen! How, as the human head festered and rotted above the city gates, was the prerogative sweetened by the putrefaction! And then the daily lessons preached by the mute horror of the dead man's mouth, to the human life daily passing beneath it! What precepts of love and gentleness towards all men fell from the shrivelled lips—what Christianity gleamed from the withered eye-balls! How admirably were the every-day thoughts of men associated with prerogative, its majesty for ever preached by dead men's tongues—its beauty visible in dead men's flesh. Those were the golden days—the merry days—we shall never see such times again. Now, a poor and frivolous race, we pass beneath Temple Bar, untaught by the grim moralities that from its height were wont to instruct our forefathers. In the days of Elizabeth we might have lounged at the door of the city shopkeeper, and whilst chaffering for a commodity of this world, have had our thoughts elevated by a consideration of the ghastly skull—grinning a comment upon all earthly vanities—above us. Those days are gone—passed for ever. We


'Hangman's surgery'

have now plate-glass and dainty painting, and precious woods, in the shops of our tradesmen, but nought to take us from the vanity of life—no prerogative of a Virgin Queen, in the useful semblance of a *memento mori*.

It is to the want of such stern yet wholesome monitors we are doubtless to attribute the decay of the national character. We are sunk in effeminacy, withered by the fond ministerings of science. The road of life—which, by its ruggedness, was wont to try the sinews of our Elizabethan ancestors—we, their degenerate children, have spread as with a carpet, and hung the walls around us with radiant tapestry. The veriest household drudge of our time is a Sardanapalus compared to the lackey of the Virgin Queen. The tatterdemalion, who lives on highway alms, may look down upon the beggar of Elizabeth; for the mendicant of Victoria may, with his prayed-for pence, purchase luxuries unknown to the Dives of former days.

And what—if we listen to complaining patriotism—what is the evil born of this? A loss of moral energy; a wasting away of national fibre. Believe this melancholy philosophy, and national weakness came in (a moral moth in the commodity) with silk stockings. Ere then was the bearing of man more majestic in the eyes of angels! For then was the sword the type of station, a gentleman no more appearing abroad without his rapier than a wasp without its sting. Human life could not but lose part of its dignity with its cold steel. What a fine comment on the charity, the gentleness, the humanity of his fellow-men, did every gentleman wear at his side! He was, in a manner, his own law-maker, his own executioner. In the judgment of later philosophy, we are prone to believe that the said gentlemen may appear, at the best, ferocious simpletons—creatures swaggering "between heaven and earth," with their hands upon their hilts, ready and yearning for a thrust at those who took the wall of their gentility. Ha! those, indeed,

were the good old days! And then came a whining, curd-complexioned benevolence, and in progress of time, its thin, white, womanly fingers unbuckled the sword-belt of the bully, and organised police. Sword-makers were bankrupt, and human nature lost a grace!

Thus, it appears, the world has been from age to age declining in virtue, and can only escape the very profound of iniquity by a speedy dissolution. Every half dozen years or so, a prophet growls from a cellar, or cries from the altitude of a garret, the advent of the last day. An earthquake, or some other convulsion (the particulars of which are only vouchsafed to the prophet) is to destroy the earth or London at least; whereupon old gentlemen remove to Gravesend, and careful housewives take stock of their plate. Now, every such prophecy, instead of bewildering honest people with all sorts of fears, and all sorts of anxieties for their personal property, ought to make them sing thanksgiving songs for the promised blessing. It being the creed of these people that the world gets worse and worse, they would at least have the comfort to know that they had seen the last of its wickedness. For a moment, reader, we will suppose you one of these. Consider, upon your own faith, what a terrible wretch will necessarily be your great-great-great-great-great-grandson! Well, would it not be satisfaction to you that this dragon (we believe dragons are oviparous) should be crushed in the egg of the future? How would you like your own flesh and blood inevitably changed by the course of time into the anatomy of something very like a demon? You are bad enough as you are; that dismal truth your own humility preaches to you; to say nothing of the plain speaking of your neighbours. No; out of pure love and pity for humanity, you ought to wish all the world to stop with your own pulse. It is hard enough now, even for the best of us, to keep on the respectable side of the

statutes; but, with the growing wickedness of the world, we should like to know what sort of metal will the laws be made of. The great social link must inevitably be a fetter.

How often have we stood, with the unseen tears in our eyes, watching the nobility of the land, in nobility's best bib and tucker, winding in golden line to the drawing-room of Queen Victoria! Alas! degenerate dukes—faded duchesses. Marquises fallen upon evil times—marchionesses very dim indeed! What are you to the nobility of Elizabeth? What to the grandees of those merry days, the golden shadow of which is brightness itself to the cold, grey glimmering of the present? We have yet one thought to comfort us; and that is, a half belief that the court of Elizabeth was held as nothing to all courts preceding; and so back, until Englishmen mourned over the abomination of cloaks and vests, sorrowing for those golden days, those good old times of the painted Britons! Great was the virtue abounding in *woad*; grievous the wilful iniquity woven in broad-cloth.

Queen Elizabeth died—fair, regal bud!—in the sweetness of virginity; and though the sun (by some despairing effort) managed to rise the next morning, it has never been wholly itself since. She died, and was brought to Whitehall, to the great calamity of the fish then swimming in the river; for a poet of the day, quoted by Camden, has eternised the evil that in the hour fell upon Thames flounders:—

> "The Queene was brought by water to Whitehall;
> At every stroke the oares teares let fall;
> More clung about the barge; fish under water
> *Wept out their eyes of pearle, and swame blinde after.*
> I think the bargemen might with easier thighes
> Have rowed her thither in her people's eyes.
> Yet, howsoere, thus much my thoughts have scann'd,
> She'd come by water, had she come by land."

So closed the golden days of Queen Elizabeth; leaving us, in all the virtues and comforts of the world, the bankrupt children of Queen Victoria!

Unworthy is he of the balmy sweetness of this blessed May who can think so! A churlish, foolish, moody traitor to the spirit of goodness and beauty that, as with the bounty of the sun and air, calls up forms of loveliness in his path, and surrounds him with ten thousand household blessings! With active presences, which the poet of Elizabeth, in even *his* large love for man could scarce have dreamed of; or, dreaming, seen them as a part of fairy fantasy—a cloud-woven pageant!

Let the man who lives by his daily sweat pause in his toil, and, with his foot upon his spade, watch the white smoke that floats in the distance; listen to the lessening thunder of the engine that, instinct with Vulcanic life, has rushed, devouring space, before it. That little curl of smoke hangs in the air a thing of blessed promise—that roar of the engine is the melody of hope to unborn generations. But now, the digger of the soil looks moodily at that vapour, and his heart is festering with the curse upon the devil Steam; that fiend that grinds his bones beneath the wheels of British Juggernaut. Poor creature! The seeming demon is a beneficent presence that, in the ripeness of time, will work regeneration of the hopes of men.

Let the poor man—the mechanic of a town—look around him. Let him in his own house, humble though it be, acknowledge the presence of a thousand comforts which, had he lived two centuries ago, he could not with a baron's wealth have purchased. Not mere creature enjoyments; but humanizing, refining pleasures, drawing man nearer to man, expanding the human heart, and imparting to humanity the truest greatness in the greatest gentleness.

"What!" it may be asked, "can you have the hardi-

hood, or the ignorance, to vaunt these days above the days of Elizabeth? These days with famine throwing the shuttle—with ignorance, wholly brutish, digging in the pit—with gold, a monster all brain, and so the very worst of monsters—dominating throughout the land, and crushing the pulses of thousands within its hard, relentless grasp? Would you not rather pray for a return of those merry, merry days, when men were whipped, imprisoned, branded, burnt, at little more than the mere will of Majesty, for mere opinion—but who had, nevertheless, bacon and bread and ale sufficient to the day?"

No; we would go no step backward, but many in advance; our faith still increasing in the enlarged sympathies of men; in the reverence which man has learned and is still learning to pay towards the nature of his fellow-men; in the deep belief that whatever change may and *must* take place in the social fabric—we have that spirit of wisdom and tolerance (certainly *not* a social creature of the golden days) waxing strong among us,—so strong that the fabric will be altered and repaired brick by brick, and stone by stone. Meanwhile, the scaffolding is fast growing up about it.

THE LITTLE GREAT AND THE GREAT LITTLE

EXTRAORDINARY is the mind of man! He sails in mid-air; he compasseth the globe; he blunts the lightning; he writeth *Hamlet*, *Paradise Lost*, the *Principia*, and he chaineth a flea by the leg. He maketh the strong elephant to bend his joints, and he subdueth a flea, if not to "hew wood," at least to draw water. These, the later triumphs of the human essence, are now on exhibition somewhere in that long ark for modern monsters, Regent Street! Yes, the "Industrious Fleas" at once delight and shame fashionable idlers, sending them to their beds to ruminate on the sagacity of the living world about them.

We love a monster as much as ever did *Trinculo*; hence we have been bitten; that is, we have made acquaintance with the "Industrious Fleas." Let us shortly enumerate their separate capabilities. One flea, a fine muscular fellow, worthy, did fairies die, to be mourning coach horse at the funeral of Queen Titania (how long since the fairies had a

coronation!), draws a very splendid carriage, constructed from the pith of elder. He curvets, and bounds, and shows his blood (he must have been fed in some royal stable—he has surely fattened on kings) with the proudest royal coach-horse, on—as they say at public dinners—"the proudest day of its life." Having seen its legs, we shall think more seriously of the kick of a flea ever after. Then, to talk of a "flea bite," as a proverb for a wife—a mere nothing; let those who speak thus vainly contemplate the terrible proboscis of the aforesaid chariot flea, and then think of the formidable weapon, plunged through one's tender skin, and sucking up by quarts (we saw, we looked through a microscope) our hearts' best blood! To go to bed appears no wonder, but to be able to rise again after what we have beheld, seems to us a daily miracle! To proceed. Another of the "industrious" takes the air with a chain and a weight to his leg, the wonder consisting in its resignation to its destiny. A third flea, also manacled, draws water. A fourth flea has a more awful duty—to bear Napoleon Bonaparte, late of France, but now of St Helena—there he is, the victor of a hundred fights, majestically seated on flea back. An enthusiastic Frenchman may, if he have good eyes, see in the miniature emperor, the sallow, thoughtful face, the "brassy eye" (*vide* Haydon's account) of the original despot—could the figure take snuff, the illusion would be perfect. Two other fleas, soldiers, fight a desperate combat, affording in their proper persons a triumphant refutation to the celebrated dogma of the philosopher, that "fleas are not lobsters." We understood from the *Cicerone* that their deadly enmity was excited towards each other by a mutual tickling. We were also informed that one of the fleas ("epicurean animal!") had the honour to sup off the hand of the Princess Augusta. This fact was shamefully hushed up by the magas of the *Court Circular*, else how would it

have astonished the world to have read that "last night Her Royal Highness the Princess Augusta gave a supper to the fleas!" Certain it is, the document contains at times news of less interest.[1] This condescension on the part of her Highness, though it speaks much for her affability, has been the cause of grievous heartburnings and bickerings among the society. It is extraordinary the airs that every flea gives himself about "his blood." However, it is to be hoped that a herald will be appointed to settle the claims of each disputant, and to favour the whole with a genealogical tree. Who knows whether one of these fleas' ancestors did not bite Sancho Panza, or the Dulcinea del Toboso, or the *Carters*, who were "bitten like a tench"? Speaking on our own responsibility, we are afraid that each of these little creatures, after all its vanity about pure blood, has been somewhat capricious in its appetite; a fault, by the by, which often puzzles the heralds in their labours, for certain other little animals are very angry, when they speak of blood, too.

We quitted the exhibition, and walking at a melancholy pace, with our long, lean visage bent towards the earth, we were accosted by a man—an odd-looking person, with a box at his back—who begged we would stop and see his show. We were in a sight-seeing humour, and at once consented. The box was placed on a trestle, our eye was at the glass, and our ears open, when the man commenced his description:—

"The first view presents you with a grand state coach of the Great Mogul; it is drawn by a thousand curious animals; they are, as you will perceive, very finely dressed in rich harness, tall feathers, and flying ribbons; they come and tie themselves to the coach, and feel it an honour to be

[1] Her Majesty the Queen, and Prince George of Cumberland, stood the whole of the sermon!! — *Court Circular*, April 8, 1832.

bridled ; they snort, and caper, and kick mud into the eyes of the bystanders.

"The next view shows you one of these animals with a long chain and a heavy log. This chain was fixed upon his leg when he was born ; and though he has sometimes tried to file away the links, he has had his knuckles so smartly rapped, and been called so many names—been so preached to that the chain and log were for his own good, and that it would ruin him to take them from him—that 'tis likely he will, for the public benefit, be made to wear them to the end of his days.

"The animal in the next view, that is chained and draws water, is one of the Great Mogul's million of slaves. Although he draws bucket after bucketful for the Mogul's house and his household, for his horses and his dogs, and his kitchen, and his flower garden, he is often perishing himself for one half mouthful ; his lips are blistered, and his tongue black, with the water drawn by his own hands, running about him.

"The fourth animal is mounted on a fiery dragon, that, belching flames, kindles forests, fires towns, dries rivers, blasts harvests, and swallows men, women, and sucking babes. Look to the left, and the dragon is turned to a something no bigger than a mouse, and with its stinted rations of butter and cheese.

"In the fifth and last view you see ten thousand of these animals ferociously killing, biting, tearing another ten thousand, whom they never saw till a few minutes ago, and with whom they have no quarrel. But they kill one another because they are tickled to do so. That is, certain animals go about with tickling wands called 'glory,' 'deathless renown,' 'laurel,' and other titillating syllables, poking in the ribs of the poor benighted creatures."

I took my eye from the glass : "My good man, what have you shown me ? "

"Fleas, sir."

"Fleas!—nonsense; the fleas are shown above."

"Yes, sir; but mine are the fleas with two legs; though, *if* I must be honest, I can't say I see any difference between the fleas in my show-box and the fleas above."

THE MANAGER'S PIG

"Some people are not to be persuaded to taste of any creatures they have daily seen and been acquainted with whilst they were alive. . . . In this behaviour, methinks there appears something like a consciousness of guilt; it looks as if they endeavoured to save themselves from the imputation of a crime (which they know sticks somewhere) by removing the cause of it as far as they can from themselves."—MANDEVILLE.

ARISTIDES TINFOIL, it is our fixed belief, was intended by nature either for lawn sleeves or ermined robes; he was, we doubt it not, sent into this world an embryo bishop, or a lord-chief-justice *in posse*. Such, we are convinced, was the benignant purpose of nature; but the cruel despotism of worldly circumstance relentlessly crossed the fair design; and Tinfoil, with a heart of honey and a head of iron, was only a player—or, we should rather say, a master among players. Tinfoil might have preached charity-sermons till tears should have overflowed the pews; no matter, he acted

the benevolent old men to the sobs and spasms of a crowded audience: he might, with singular efficacy, have passed sentence of death on coiners and sheep-stealers; circumstances, however, confined his mild reproofs to scene-shifters, bill-stickers, Cupids at one shilling per night, and white muslin Graces.

"Where is Mr Moriturus?" asked Tinfoil, chagrined at the untoward absence of his retainer. "Where is he?"

"Ill, Sir," was the melancholy answer, "very ill."

"Ill!" exclaimed Tinfoil, in a tone of anger, quickly subsiding into mild remonstrance. "Ill!—why—why doesn't the good man *die at once*?"

A pretty budding girl had, unhappily, listened to the silvery tongue of a rival manager. "Take her from the villain!" exclaimed Tinfoil to the sorrowing parent; "bring her here, and then—then I'll tell you what I'll do."

"Dear, kind Mr Tinfoil, what will you do!"

"I'll bring her out, Sir—bring her out in—" and here the manager named a play in which the horrors of seduction are painted in bold colours for the indignant virtuous. "I'll bring her out in that, Sir, as a particular favour to you, and sympathising as I must with the affliction you suffer, I—I myself will play the injured father, Sir."

These, however, are but faint lines in the strongly-marked character of Tinfoil, and merely displaying them to awaken the attention of the reader to what we consider a most triumphant piece of casuistry on the part of our hero—to an incident which admits of so many hundred worldly illustrations—we shall proceed to the pig. The subject, we own, may appear unpromising from its extreme homeliness; yet, as the precious bezoar is sought for in deer and goats, so may a pearl of price be found even in a pig.

It is our fervent wish to be most exact in every point of this little history; yet cannot we remember the exact year in which Tinfoil, revolving in his managerial mind the

very many experiments made under his government on the curiosity and sensibilities of the public, determined in a golden moment, upon the introduction of a pig, in a drama to be expressly written for the animal's capacities. In the slang of the craft, the pig was to be measured for his part.

We cannot take it upon ourselves to avow, that an accident of late occurrence to a brother actor, did not, at least remotely, influence the choice of Tinfoil. The mishap was this. A few miles from London—for the sake of unborn generations we conceal the name of the town—the dullard denizens had manifested an extraordinary apathy to the delights of the drama. In the despairing words of one of the sufferers, "nothing could move 'em." However, another of more sanguine temperament resolved to make a last bold effort on their stubborn souls, and to such high end, set a pig at them. Mingling the blandishments of the lottery with the witcheries of the drama, he caused it to be printed in boldest type to the townspeople of ——, that a shower of little bits of paper would take place between the play and farce, and amidst this shower a prize would descend, conveying to the lucky possessor the entire property of a real China-bred porker! Inconceivable as to us it is the scheme failed—the pig remained live stock upon the hands of the projector, who, the next morning, walked to town; and recounting his adverse fortune to the calculating Tinfoil, supplicated any employment.

"And you still possess the pig? Humph!" mused Tinfoil; "perhaps we may come to some arrangement."

In few words the applicant was admitted among Tinfoil's troop; the pig, at a nominal price, passing into the hands of the manager.

The pig was no sooner a member of the company than the household author was summoned by Tinfoil, who, introducing the man of letters to the porker, shortly intimated that "he must write a part for him."

"For a pig, Sir?" exclaimed the author.

"Measure him," said Tinfoil, not condescending to notice the astonishment of the dramatist.

"But, my dear Sir, it is impossible that——"

"Sir! impossible is a word which I cannot allow in my establishment. By this time, Sir, you ought to know that my will, Sir, is sufficient for all things, Sir—that, in a word, Sir, there is a great deal of Napoleon about me, Sir."

We must admit that the dramatist ought not to have forgotten this last interesting circumstance, Mr Tinfoil himself very frequently recurring to it. Indeed, it was only an hour before that he had censured the charwoman for having squandered a whole sack of sawdust on the hall floor, when half a sack was the allotted quantity. "He, Mr Tinfoil, had said half a sack; and the woman knew, or ought to know, there was a good deal of Napoleon about him!" To return to the pig.

"Measure him, Sir," cried Mr Tinfoil, the deepening tones growling through his teeth, and his finger pointing still more emphatically downwards to the pig.

"Why," observed the author, "if it could be measured, perhaps——"

"*If* it could! Sir," and Mr Tinfoil, when at all excited, trolled the monosyllable with peculiar energy—"Sir, I wouldn't give a straw for a dramatist who couldn't measure the cholera-morbus."

"Much may be done for an actor by measuring," remarked the dramatist, gradually falling into the opinion of his employer.

"Everything, Sir! Good God! what might I not have been had I condescended to be measured? Human nature, Sir—the divine and glorious characteristic of our common being, Sir—that is the thing, Sir—by heavens! Sir, when I think of that great creature, Shakespeare, Sir, and think that he never measured actors—no, Sir——"

"No, Sir," acquiesced the dramatist.

"Notwithstanding, Sir, we live in other times, Sir, and you must write a part for the pig, Sir."

"Very well, Sir; if he must be measured, Sir, he must," said the author.

"It is a melancholy thing to be obliged to succumb to the folly of the day," remarked Mr Tinfoil, "and yet, Sir, I could name certain people, Sir, who, by heavens! Sir, would not have a part to their backs, Sir, if they had not been measured for it, Sir. Let me see: it is not three o'clock—well, some time to-night you'll let me have the piece for the pig, Sir."

Now whether the writer addressed was by his "so potent art" enabled to measure a pig—to write a perfect swinish drama in a few hours—or whether, knowing the Buonapartean self-will of the manager, the dramatist thought it wise to make no remonstrance, we cannot truly discover: certain it is, with no objection made, he took his leave.

"An extraordinary young man, Sir—I have brought him out, Sir—a wonderful young man, Sir," observed Mr Tinfoil to a friend and neighbour, a dealer in marine-stores. "Only wants working, Sir—requires nothing but being kept at it, Sir."

"Well, it must be a puzzling trade," remarked the dealer.

"Puzzling, Sir! By heavens! Sir, my heart bleeds for men of letters, Sir—they are great creatures, Sir—wonderful natures, Sir—we cannot think too highly of them, Sir—cannot sufficiently reward them, Sir! Now, Sir, it is perfectly unknown my liberality towards that young man! But then, Sir—it is my delight, Sir, when I find real genius, Sir—when I meet with a man of original mind, Sir—by heavens! Sir," again cried Mr Tinfoil, resorting to the exclamation as an outlet for his overcharged feelings.

The pig was duly measured—the piece prepared—and, having been produced at enormous expense, was sealed with the unqualified approbation of a discerning public.

The pig-drama had been represented about twenty nights, when the author of the piece, in friendly converse with his patron manager, remarked "that the porker had been a most profitable venture."

"Why, Sir," replied Mr Tinfoil, "tolerably well; but the fact is, I am obliged to bolster him. He has had the advantage of three new afterpieces, and therefore can't complain that he has been let down. Still, the pig has done very well, and perhaps may run a fortnight more." Saying this Tinfoil quaffed from a brimming glass of his chosen fluid.

"At all events," remarked the author, "the pig possesses one advantage not to be found in any other of your actors."

"And what, Sir," asked Mr Tinfoil, "what may that be?"

"Why, after the pig has done his work, and the piece is put by, you may eat the pig."

The manager started from the inhuman man of letters with a look of mingled horror, disgust and pity. When he had somewhat recovered from his amazement he asked with evident loathing, "What did you say, Sir?"

"I said," replied the insensible author, "that when the pig had played out his part you might eat him"

Mr Tinfoil, gently stirring his brandy-and-water, fixed an eye, like that of death-darting cockatrice, upon the author, and after swallowing the liquor, and thereby somewhat regaining his self-possession, he addressed the thoughtless dramatist in words and tones that, as he has since declared, can never cease to vibrate in his memory.

"Sir!" thus spoke Mr Tinfoil. "I regret—much regret, Sir, that anything in my conduct could have

induced you, Sir, to think so uncharitably of my disposition, Sir."

"I assure you, Sir——"

"Hear me out, Sir. What, Sir! think me capable of feeding upon an animal that I have played with—a creature, whose sagacity has almost made it my humble friend—a pig that has eaten from my hand—that knows my voice—that I—I eat that pig—good heavens, Sir!"

"I'm sure I didn't mean——"

"No, Sir," cried Tinfoil, "not were I starving, Sir—not were I famishing, Sir, could I be brought to taste that pig."

Much more did Mr Tinfoil deliver declaratory of his horror at the bare idea of setting his teeth in the flesh of his quadruped actor, and the rebuked man of letters quitted the manager with an exalted notion of his sensibility.

The pig-drama continued to be played to the increasing satisfaction of the public; the audience, however, only being admitted to view the professional abilities of the animal; his suppers—from some extraordinary omission of Tinfoil—not being eaten before the curtain. Great, however, as was the success of the pig, at about the fortieth night his prosperity began to wane—he was withdrawn, and passed into oblivion.

A few weeks had elapsed, and the author was summoned to the dwelling of his manager, to write a play for a stud of horses. Tinfoil was at dinner, whereto he courteously invited his household scribe.

"You oughtn't to refuse," said one of the diners, "for this," and the speaker pointed to some pickled pork in the dish, "this is an old friend of yours."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the dramatist, looking reproachfully at Tinfoil. "Why, not the pig?"

Tinfoil somewhat abashed coughed and nodded.

"Why, you said that nothing on earth would tempt you to eat that pig."

"No more it could, Sir," cried the assured manager, "no, Sir—no more it could—*unless salted!*"

Of how many applications is this casuistry of the manager susceptible?

"When, Sir," cried the pensioned patriot, "I swore that no power in the universal world could make me accept a favour at the hands of such men—I meant——"

"*Unless salted!*"

How often is it with men's principles, as with the manager's pig; things inviolable, immutable—*unless salted?*

SOME ACCOUNT OF A STAGE DEVIL

THE "principle of evil," as commonly embodied in the theatre, has been a sorry affair; the stage devil, in a word, a shabby person. From the time of the mysteries at Coventry to the melodramas of the phosphoric pen of the blue-fire dramatists, the father of iniquity has made his appearance in a manner more provocative of contempt than of peace; a candidate for our smiles, rather than a thing of terrors; we have chuckled where we should have shuddered.

That the stage devil should have been so commonplace an individual, when there were devils innumerable wherefrom an admirable selection of demons might be "constantly on hand," made it the more inexcusable on the part of those gentlemen invested with the power of administering to, and in some measure forming, public taste. What a catalogue of devils may be found in the Fathers! Let us particularise a few from the thousand of demons with which the benevolent imaginations of our ancestors have peopled the air, the earth, and the flood. Poor humanity stands aghast at the fearful odds of spiritual influences arrayed against it; for it is the fixed opinion of Paracelsus, that "the air is not so full of flies in summer as it is

at all times of invisible devils"; whilst another philosopher declares that there is "not so much as an hairbreadth empty in earth or in water, above or under the earth!" Cornelius Agrippa has carefully classified devils, making them of nine orders. The first are the false Gods adored at Delphos and elsewhere in various idols, having for their captain Beelzebub; the second rank is of "liars and equivocators," as Apollo—poor Apollo!—"and the like"; the third are "vessels of anger, inventors of all mischief," and their prince is Belial; the fourth are malicious, revengeful devils, their chief being Asmodeus; the fifth are cozeners, such as belong to magicians and witches, their prince is Satan; the sixth are those aerial devils that corrupt the air, and cause plagues, thunder, fire, and tempests—Meresin is their prince; the seventh is a destroyer, captain of the fairies; the eighth is an accusing or calumniating devil; and the ninth are all these in several kinds, their commander being Mammon. Of all these infernal creatures Cornelius Agrippa writes, with the confidence and seeming accuracy of a man favoured with their most intimate acquaintance.

In addition to these we have, on the authority of grave philosophers, legions of household devils, from such as "commonly work by blazing stars," fire-drakes, or *ignes fatui*, to those who "counterfeit suns and moons, and oftentimes sit on ship masts." Their common place of rendezvous, when unemployed, is Mount Hecla. Cardon, with an enviable gravity, declares that "his father had an aerial devil bound to him for twenty and eight years." Paracelsus relates many stories, all authenticated, of she-devils, "that have lived and been married to mortal men, and so continued for certain years with them, and after for some dislike have forsaken them." Olaus Magnus—a most delightful liar—has a narrative of "one Hotheius, a king of Sweden, that, having lost his company as he

was hunting one day, met with these water-nymphs and fairies, and was feasted by them"; and Hector Boethius of "Macbeth and Banquo, two Scottish lords, that, as they were wandering in the woods, had their fortune told them by three strange women!" For the "good people," the wood-nymphs, foliots, fairies, they are, on the best authority, to be seen in many places in Germany, "where they do usually walk in little coats some two feet long." Subterranean devils are divided by Olaus Magnus into six companies; they commonly haunt mines, "and the metal-men in many places account it good luck, a sign of treasure and rich ore, when they see them." Georgius Agricola (*de subterraneis animantibus*) reckons two more kinds, "that are clothed after the manner of metal-men, and will do their work." Their office, according to the shrewd guess of certain philosophers, "is to keep treasure in the earth that it be not all at once revealed."

On the 20th of June 1484, it is upon record that the devil appeared "at Hamond, in Saxony," in the likeness of a field-piper, and carried away a hundred and thirty children "that were never after seen!" I might fill folios with the pranks and malicious mummeries of the evil spirit, all, too, duly attested by the most respectable witnesses, but shall at once leave the demons of the philosophers for the spirits of the playmongers, the devils of the world for the devils of the stage.

Why is it that, nine times out of ten, your stage devil is a droll rather than a terrible creature? I suspect this arises from the bravado of innate wickedness. We endeavour to shirk all thoughts, all recollections of his horrible attributes, by endowing him with grotesque propensities. We strive to laugh ourselves out of our fears: we make a mountebank of what is in truth our terror, and resolutely strive to grin away our apprehensions. Surely some feeling of this kind must be at the bottom of all

our ten thousand jokes at the devil's expense—of the glee and enjoyment with which the devil is received at the theatre; where, until the appearance of Mr Wieland, he had been but a commonplace absurdity, a dull repetition of a most dull joke.

Wieland has evidently studied the attributes of the evil principle; with true German profundity, he has taken their length, and their depth, and their breadth, he has all the devil at his very finger ends, and richly deserves the very splendid silver-gilt horns and tail (manufactured by Rundell and Bridges) presented to him a few nights since by the company at the English Opera-house; presented with a speech from the stage-manager, which, or I have been grossly misinformed, drew tears from the eyes of the very scene-shifters.

Can anybody forget Wieland's devil in the *Daughter of the Danube?* Never was there a more dainty bit of infernal nature. It lives in my mind like one of Hoffman's tales, a realisation of the hero of the nightmare, a thing in almost horrible affinity with human passions. How he eyed the Naiades, how he laughed and ogled, and faintingly approached, then wandered round the object of his demoniacal affections! And then how he burst into action! How he sprang, and leapt, and whirled, and, chuckling at his own invincible nature, spun like a tee-totum at the sword of his baffled assailant! And then his yawn and sneeze! There was absolute poetry in them—the very highest poetry of the ludicrous: a fine imagination to produce such sounds as part of the strange, wild, grotesque phantom—to give it a voice that, when we heard it, we felt to be the only voice such a thing could have. There is fine truth in the devils of Wieland. We feel that they live and have their being in the realms of fancy; they are not stereotype commonplaces, but most rare and delicate monsters, brought from the air, the earth, or

the flood; and wherever they are from, bearing in them the finest characteristics of their mysterious and fantastic whereabouts.

Wieland's last devil, in an opera bearing his fearful name, is not altogether so dainty a fellow as his elder brother of the Danube, whose melancholy so endeared him to our sympathies, whose lackadaisical demeanour so won upon our human weakness. In *The Devil's Opera* the hero is more of the pantomimist than of the thinking creature; he is not contemplative, but all for action; he does not, like the former fiend, retire into the fastness of his infernal mind to brood on love and fate, but is incessantly grinning, leaping, tumbling; hence he is less interesting to the meditative part of the audience, though, possibly, more attractive to the majority of playgoers, who seem to take the "evil principle" under their peculiar patronage, laughing, shouting, and hurrahing at every scurvy trick played by it on poor, undefended humanity; though, with a bold aim of genius on the part of the author, the devil, in the opera, is made the ally of love and virtue against blind tyranny and silly superstition. The devil is changed, bound, the bond-slave of the good and respectable part of the *dramatis personae*, to the confusion of the foolish and the wicked. This is certainly putting the "evil principle" to the very first advantage. The best triumph of the highest benevolence is, undoubtedly, to turn the dominating fiend into the toiling vassal, and in the new opera this glory is most unequivocally achieved.

To Wieland we are greatly indebted for having reformed the "infernal powers" of the theatre; for having rescued the imp of the stage from the vulgar commonplace character in which he has too long distinguished himself, or, I ought rather to say, exposed himself; for there was no mystery whatever in him: he was a sign-post devil, a miserable daub, with not one of those emanations of profound, un-

earthly thought—not the slightest approach to that delicacy of colouring, that softening of light into shade, and shade into light, that distinguish the devil of Wieland. No: in him we have the foul fiend divested of all his vulgar, Bartlemy Fair attributes; his horns, and tail, and saucer-eyes, and fish-hook nails, are the least part of him; they are the mere accidents of his nature, not his nature itself; we have the devil in the abstract, and are compelled to receive with some consideration the popular and charitable proverb that declares him to be not quite so black as limners have shadowed him.

By the rarest accident I have obtained some account of the birth and childhood of Wieland. It appears that he is a German born, being the youngest of six sons of Hans Wieland, a poor and most amiable doll-maker, a citizen of Hildesheim. When only four years old the child was lost in the Hartz Mountains, whither his father and several neighbours had resorted to make holiday. The child had from his cradle manifested the greatest propensities towards the ludicrous; it was his delight to place his father's dolls in the most preposterous positions, doing this with a seriousness, a gravity, in strange contrast with his employment. It was plain to Professor Teufelskopf, a frequent visitor at the shop of old Wieland, employed by the professor on toys that are yet to astound the world—being no other than a man and wife and four children, made entirely out of pear-tree, and yet so exquisitely constructed, as to be enabled to eat and drink, cry, and pay taxes, with a punctuality and propriety not surpassed by many machines of flesh and blood—I say it was the opinion of Professor Teufelskopf that young Wieland was destined to play a great part among men, an opinion we are happy to say nightly illustrated by the interesting subject of this memoir. We have, however, to speak of his adventures when only four years old, in the Hartz Mountains. For a whole month was the child

missing, to the agony of its parents, and the deep regret of all the citizens of Hildesheim, with whom little George was an especial favourite. The mountains were overrun by various parties in search of the unfortunate little vagrant, but with no success. It was plain that the boy had been caught away by some spirit of the mines with which the marvellous districts abound, or, it might be, carried to the very height of the Brockenberg, by the king of the mountains, to be his page and cup-bearer. The gravest folks of the Hildesheim shook their heads, and more than two declared that they never thought George would grow up to be a man—he was so odd, so strange, so fantastic, so unlike any other child. The despair of Hans Wieland was fast settling into deep melancholy, and he had almost given up all hope, when, as he sat brooding at his fireside one autumn night, his wife—she had quitted him not a minute to go upstairs—uttered a piercing shriek. Hans rushed from the fireside, and in an instant joined his wife, who, speechless with delight and wonder, pointed to the nook in the chamber where little George was wont to sleep, and where, at the time, but how brought there was never, never known, the boy lay in the profoundest slumber; in all things the same plump, good-looking child, save that his cheek was more than usually flushed. Hans Wieland and his wife fell upon their knees and sobbed thanksgivings.

I cannot dwell upon the effect produced by this mysterious return of the child upon the people of Hildesheim. The shop of Hans Wieland was thronged with folks anxious to learn from the child himself a full account of his wanderings, of how he happened to stray away, of what he had seen, and by what means he had been brought back. To all these questions, though on other points a most docile infant, George maintained the most dogged silence, several of the church authorities, half a dozen professors, nay, the great Teufelskopf himself, questioned the child; but all in

vain, George was resolutely dumb. It was plain, however, that he had been the playfellow, the pet of supernatural beings; and though there can be but little doubt that his friends and devils as shown upon the stage are no other than faithful copies of the grotesque originals at this moment sporting in the neighbourhood of the Brockenberg, Mr Wieland, as I am credibly informed, though a gentle and amiable person in other respects, is apt to be ruffled, nay, violent, if impertinently pressed upon the subject of his early wanderings. When, however, we reflect upon the great advantages obtained by Mr Wieland from what is now to be considered the most fortunate accident of his childhood, we must admit that there is somewhat less praise due to him than if he appeared before us as a great original. Since I have commenced this paper, I have been informed by Mr Dullandry, of *The Wet Blanket*, that the goblin in *The Daughter of the Danube*, a touch of acting in which Mr Wieland gathered a wreath of red-hot laurels, is by no means what it was taken for, a piece of fine invention on the part of the actor, but an imitation, a most servile copy of the real spirit that carried George away from his father and friends, tempting the little truant with a handful of the most delicious black cherries, and a draught of kirschen-wasser. That every gesture, every movement, nay, that the leer of the eye and the "villainous hanging of the nether lip," the sneeze, the cough, the sigh, the lightning speed, the

"*Infernal* beauty, melancholy grace,"

all the attributes of mind and body of that most delicate fiend of the Brockenberg, were given in the hobgoblin of the Danube. Hence, if Mr Wieland be not, as we thought him, a great original, he is most assuredly the first of mimics, and has turned a peril of his childhood to a golden purpose. Dullandry declares upon the best authority—doubtless his own—that the devil of the Brockenberg, when

little George cried to go home to his father and mother, his brother and sister, would solace the child by playing upon a diabolic fiddle, the strings of wolf's gut and the bow-string from the snowy hair of the witch of the Alps, dancing the while, and by the devilish magic of the music bringing from every fissure in the rocks, every cleft in the earth, and from every stream, their supernatural intelligences to caper and make holiday, for the especial delight of the poor, kidnapped son of the doll-maker of Hildesheim. If this be true, and when Dullandry speaks it is hard to doubt, his words being pearls without speck or flaw—if this be true, we here beg leave to inform Mr Wieland that from this minute we withdraw from him a great part of that admiration with which we have always remembered the spasmodic twitch of his elbow, the self-complacency about his eyes and jaws, the lofty look of conscious power, the stamping of the foot, and the inexhaustible energy of *bowing* which marked his *Devil on Two Sticks*, all such graces and qualifications being, as from Dullandry, it now appears, the original property of the devil of the Brockenberg. However, to return to our narrative, which, as I am prepared to show, has in these days of daring speculation the inestimable charm of truth to recommend it to the severest attention of my readers.

Little George remained a marvel to the good citizens of Hildesheim, few of whom, for certain prudential reasons, would any-longer permit their children to play with him; fearing, and reasonably enough, some evil from contact with a child who was evidently a favourite with the spirits of the Hartz Mountains. However, this resolution had no effect on George, who more than ever indulged in solitary rambles, becoming day by day more serious and taciturn. His little head —as Professor Teufelskopf sagaciously observed—was filled with the shapes and shadows haunting the Brockenberg. Many were the solicitations made by Teufelskopf and rival

professors to Hans Wieland, to be permitted to take little George and educate him for a philosopher, an alchemist, in fact for anything and everything, the boy displaying capacities, as all declared, only to be found in an infant Faust. To all these prayers Hans Wieland was deaf. He resolved to bring up his son to the honest and useful employment of doll-making; keeping, if possible, his head from the cobwebs and dust of the schools, and making him a worthy minister to the simple and innocent enjoyments of baby girls,[1] rather than consenting to his elevation as a puzzler and riddler among men. Thus our hero, denied to the scholastic yearnings of the great Teufelskopf, sat at home, articulating the joints of dolls, and helping to make their eyes open and shut, when—had his father the true worthy ambition in him—the boy would have been inducted into knowledge that might have given him supernatural power over living flesh and blood, bending and binding it to his own high, philosophic purposes. Hans Wieland, however, was a simple, honest soul, with a great, and, therefore, proper sense of the beauties and uses of the art of doll-making. Glad also am I to state that little George, with all his dreaminess, remained a most dutiful, sweet-tempered boy; and might be seen, seven hours at least out of the twenty-four, seated on a three-legged stool fitting the arms and legs of the ligneous hopes of the little girls of Hildesheim,

[1] One of the most touching instances of the "maternal instinct," as it has been called, in children, came under my notice a few months ago. A wretched woman, with an infant in her arms, mother and child in very tatters, solicited the alms of a nursery-maid passing with a child, clothed in the most luxurious manner, hugging a large wax doll. The mother followed the girl, begging for relief "to get bread for her child," whilst the child itself, gazing at the treasure in the arms of the baby of prosperity, cried, "Mammy, when will you buy me a doll?" I have met with few things more affecting than the contrast of the destitute parent begging her bread (the misery seemed real) and the beggar's child begging of its mother for a "doll!"

"Would solace the child
by playing upon a diabolic fiddle"

his thoughts, it may be, far, far away with the fiddling goblin of the Brockenberg, making holiday with the multitude of spirits in the Hartz Mountains.

This mental abstraction on the part of little George was but too often forced upon the observation of the worthy Hans, the young doll-maker constantly giving the looks and limbs of hobgoblins to the faces and bodies of dolls, intended by the father to supply the demand for household dolls of the same staid and prudish aspect, of the same proportion of members, as the dolls that had for two hundred years soothed and delighted the little maidens of Hildesheim. It is a fact hitherto unknown in England, that in the Museum of Hildesheim—a beautiful, though somewhat heavy building of the Saxon order—there are either eleven or twelve (I think twelve) demon dolls made by young Wieland, and to this day shown to the curious—though the circumstance has, strangely enough, remained unnoticed by the writers of Guide Books—as faithful portraits of the supernatural inhabitants of the Hartz Mountains. I am told, however, that within the last three years, one of the figures has been removed into a separate chamber, and is only to be seen by an express order from the town council, in consequence of its lamentable effects on the nerves of a certain German princess, who was so overcome by the exhibition, that it was very much feared by the whole of the principality—extending in territory at least a mile and a quarter, and containing no less than three hundred and twenty subjects—the territory would pass to a younger brother, or, what is worse, be the scene of a frightful revolution, an heir direct being wanted to consolidate the dynasty. This unfortunate event, though, possibly, fatal to the future peace of the said principality, is nevertheless a striking instance of the powerful imagination or rather of the retentive memory of the young Wieland. The doll, like all the others, is a true copy from diabolic life. How the painful

story attached to it should have escaped all the foreign correspondents of all the newspapers is a matter of surpassing astonishment.

We have now arrived at an important change in the life of our hero. His father had received a munificent order for three dolls from Prince Gotheoleog, a great patron of the fine arts in all their many branches. The dolls were intended by the prince—he was the best and most indulgent of fathers—as presents for his daughters; and, therefore, no pains, no cost, were to be spared upon them. After a lapse of three months the order was completed; and young Wieland, then in his seventh year, was dressed in his holiday suit, and—the dolls being carried by Peter Shnicht, an occasional assistant of Hans Wieland—he took his way to the palace of the prince. It was about half past twelve when he arrived there, and the weather being extremely sultry, George sat down upon the palace steps to rest and compose himself before he ventured to knock at the gate. He had remained there but a short time, when he was addressed by a tall, majestic-looking person clothed in a huntsman's suit, and carrying a double-barrel gun, a weapon used in the neighbourhood of Hildesheim in boar-shooting, who, asking our hero his name and business, was struck with the extraordinary readiness of the boy's answers, and, more than all, with a certain look of diabolic reverence peeping from his eyes, and odd smiles playing about his mouth. The stranger knocked at the gate, gave his gun to a servant, and bade the little doll-maker follow the domestic, who showed him into a sumptuous apartment. The reader is prepared to find in the man with the gun no other person than Prince Gotheoleog himself, who in a few minutes reappeared to George, asked him in the most condescending manner various questions respecting his proficiency in reading and writing, and finally dismissed him with ten groschen for his extraordinary intelligence. Six months after this Prince

Gotheoleog was appointed ambassador to the court of St James's, and young Wieland attended him in the humble, yet most honourable capacity of page. This appointment Hans Wieland, in his simplicity, believed would effectually win his romantic son from his errant habits, would cure him of day-dreaming, by plunging his neck deep into the affairs of this world. Alas! it had precisely the reverse effect upon the diplomatic doll-maker. From the moment that he found himself associated, though in the slightest degree, with politics, the latent desire to play the devil burst forth with inextinguishable ardour. A sense of duty—a filial regard for the prejudices of his father—did for a time restrain him from throwing up his very lucrative and most promising situation in the household of Prince Gotheoleog, and kept him to the incessant toil, unmitigated drudgery of diplomatic life; but having one luckless night gained admission into the gallery of the House of Commons on the debate of a certain question, to which I shall not more particularly allude, and there having seen and heard a certain member, whose name I shall not specify, sway and convulse the senate, George resolved from that moment to play the devil, and nothing but the devil, to the end of his days. He immediately retired to Bellamy's, and penned his resignation to Prince Gotheoleog, trusting, with the confidence of true genius, to fortune, to his own force of character, or, what is more likely, without once thinking of the means or accidents, to obtain the end of his indomitable aspirations —an appearance as the devil. Unrivalled as Wieland is as the representative of the fiend in all his thousand shapes —to be sure the great advantages of our hero's education in the Hartz Mountains are not to be forgotten—it is yet to be regretted that he ever

"To the playhouse gave up what was meant for mankind."

It is, and must ever be, a matter of sorrow not only to his best wishers, but to the friends of the world at large, that

those high qualifications, those surpassing powers of diabolic phlegm, vivacity and impudence, which have made Mr Wieland's devils the *beau idéal* of the infernal, had not been suffered to ripen in the genial clime of diplomacy. In the full glow of my admiration of his diabolic beauties—that is, since the facts above narrated have been in my possession—I have often scarcely suppressed a sigh to think how great an ambassador has been sacrificed in a playhouse fiend. Indeed, nothing can be more truly diplomatic than the supernatural shifts of Wieland. Had he acted in France, in the days of Napoleon, he had been kidnapped from the stage, and, *nolens volens*, made a plenipotentiary.

It is a painful theme to dwell upon the strugglings of modest, and, consequently, unsupported genius. Therefore I shall, at least for the present, suppress a very long and minute account of the trials that beset our hero in his attempts to make known the wonders that were in him. I shall not relate how he was flouted by one manager, snubbed by another, derisively smiled upon by a third; how, at length, he obtained a footing in a theatre, but was condemned to act the minor iniquities, less gifted men being promoted to play the devil himself. In all these trials, however, in all these disappointments and occasional heart-burnings, the genius of our hero continued to ripen. His horns still budded, and his tail gave token of great promise; and, at length, he burst upon the town, from top to toe, *intus et in cute*, a perfect and most dainty devil. Great as his success has been, I should not have thus lengthily dwelt upon it, were I not convinced of its future increase. There are grand mysteries in Wieland—part of his infant wanderings in the Hartz—yet to be revealed. I feel certain from the demoniacal variety of his humour, that there are a legion of spirits, fantastic and new, yet to be shown to us; all of them the old acquaintance of our hero's babyhood, all from the same genuine source of romance as his *Devil on Two*

Sticks, his *Devil of the Danube*, and his *Devil of the Opera*.

Having discussed the professional merits of Mr Wieland, the reader may probably feel curious respecting the private habits of a man so distinguished by his supernatural emotions. I am enabled, it is with considerable satisfaction I avow it, to satisfy the laudable anxiety of the reader, and from the same authentic materials that have supplied the principal part of this notice.

Mr Wieland is a gentleman of the most retired and simple manners. After the severest rehearsals of a new devil he has been known to recreate himself in the enclosure of St James's Park ; and further, to illustrate his contemplative and benevolent habits, by flinging to the various water-fowl in the canal—by-the-way, in imitation of a great regal authority—fragments of cake and biscuits. His dress is of the plainest kind, being commonly a snuff-coloured coat buttoned up to the neck ; a white cravat, drab small-clothes, and drab knee-gaiters. A gold-headed cane, said to have been in the possession of Cornelius Agrippa, is sometimes in his hand. He is occasionally induced to take a pinch of snuff, but was never seen to smoke. His face is as well known at the British Museum as are the Elgin Marbles, Mr Wieland having for some years been employed on a new edition of the *Talmud*. Although a German by birth, Mr Wieland speaks English with remarkable purity, having had the advantage of early instruction in our language from a British dramatist, who, driven from the stage by the invasion of French pieces, sought to earn his precarious bread as a journeyman doll-maker with Mr Wieland, senior. We could enter into further particulars, but shall commit a violence upon ourselves, and here wind up what we trust will henceforth prove a model for all stage biographers.

The inquiring reader may possibly desire to learn how

we became possessed of the valuable documents from which the above narrative is gathered. To this we boldly make answer; we blush not, while we avow, that our dear friend Dullandry has a most careless habit of carrying his most valuable communications for *The Wet Blanket* in his coat pocket; and that only on Thursday last we overtook him, with his papers peeping from their sanctuary, when—when, in a word, the temptation was too much for us, and the consequence is, that the reader has "some account of a stage devil."

Why should all dramatic truths be confined to the impartial and original pages of *The Wet Blanket*?

FIRESIDE SAINTS

ST DOLLY

At an early age St Dolly showed the sweetness of her nature by her tender love for her widowed father, a baker, dwelling at Pie Corner, with a large family of little children. It chanced that with bad harvests bread became so dear that, of course, bakers were ruined by high prices. The miller fell upon Dolly's father, and swept the shop with his golden thumb. Not a bed was left for the baker or his little ones. St Dolly slept upon a flour sack, having prayed that good angels would help her to help her father. Now sleeping, she dreamt that the oven was lighted, and she felt falling in a shower about her raisins, currants, almonds, lemon peel, flour, with heavy drops of brandy. Then in her dreams she saw the fairies gather up the things that fell and knead them into a cake. They put the cake into the oven, and dancing round and round, the fairies vanished, crying, "*Draw the cake, Dolly—Dolly, draw the cake!*" And Dolly awoke and drew the cake, and, behold, it was the first twelfth cake, sugared at the top, and bearing the

images of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Now this cake, shown in the window, came to the king's ear; and the king bought the cake, knighted the baker, and married Dolly to his grand falconer, to whom she proved a faithful and loving wife, bearing him a baker's dozen of lovely children.

ST PATTY

St Patty was an orphan, and dwelt in a cot with a sour old aunt. It chanced, it being bitter cold, that three hunters came and craved for meat and drink. "Pack!" said the sour aunt, "neither meat nor drink have ye here." "Neither meat nor drink," said Patty; "but something better." And she ran and brought some milk, some eggs, and some flour, and, beating them up, poured the batter in the pan. Then she took the pan and tossed the cake over; and then a robin alighted at the window, and kept singing these words—*One good turn deserves another.* And Patty tossed and tossed the cakes; and the hunters ate their fill and departed. And next day the hunter-baron came in state to the cot; and trumpets were blown, and the heralds cried—*One good turn deserves another;* in token whereof Patty became the baron's wife, and pancakes were eaten on Shrove Tuesday ever after.

ST NORAH

St Norah was a poor girl, and came to England to service. Sweet-tempered and gentle, she seemed to love everything she spoke to. And she prayed to St Patrick that he would give her a good gift that would make her not proud but useful: and St Patrick, out of his own head, taught St Norah *how to boil a potato.* A sad thing, and to be lamented, that the secret has come down to so few.

ST BETSY

St Betsy was wedded to a knight who sailed with Raleigh and brought home tobacco; and the knight smoked.

But he thought that St Betsy, like other fine ladies of the court, would fain that he should smoke out of doors, nor taint with 'bacco-smoke the tapestry. Whereupon the knight would seek his garden, his orchard, and in any weather smoke *sub Jove*. Now it chanced as the knight smoked St Betsy came to him and said, "My lord, pray ye come into the house." And the knight went with St Betsy, who took him into a newly-cedared room, and said, "I pray, my lord, henceforth smoke here: for is it not a shame that you, who are the foundation and the prop of your house, should have no place to put your head into and smoke?" And St Betsy led him to a chair, and with her own fingers filled him a pipe; and from that time the knight sat in the cedar chamber and smoked his weed.

ST PHILLIS

St Phillis was a virgin of noble parentage, but withal as simple as any shepherdess of curds and cream. She married a wealthy lord, and had much pin-money. But when other ladies wore diamond and pearls, St Phillis only wore a red and white rose in her hair. Yet her pin-money brought the best of jewellery in the happy eyes of the poor about her. St Phillis was rewarded. She lived until fourscore, and still carried the red and white rose in her face, and left their fragrance in her memory.

ST PHŒBE

St Phœbe was married early to a wilful, but withal a good-hearted husband. He was a merchant, and would come home sour and sullen from 'change. Whereupon, after much pondering, St Phœbe in her patience set to work and, praying the while, made of dyed lambswool a door-mat. And it chanced from that time, that never did the husband touch that mat that it didn't clean his

temper with his shoes, and he sat down by his Phœbe as mild as the lamb whose wool he had trod upon. Thus gentleness may make miraculous door-mats!

ST SALLY

St Sally, from her childhood, was known for her innermost love of truth. It was said of her that her heart was in a crystal shrine, and all the world might see it. Moreover, when other women denied, or strove to hide their age, St Sally said, "I am five-and-thirty." Whereupon next birthday St Sally's husband, at a feast of all their friends, gave her a necklace of six-and-thirty opal beads; and on every birthday added a bead, until the beads mounted to four-score and one. And the beads seemed to act as a charm; for St Sally, wearing the sum of her age about her neck, age never appeared in her face. Such, in the olden time, was the reward of simplicity and truth.

ST BECKY

A very good man was St Becky's husband, but with his heart a little too much in his bottle. Port wine—red port wine—was his delight, and his constant cry was—bee's-wing. Now as he sat tipsy in his arbour, a wasp dropped into his glass, and the wasp was swallowed, stinging the man inwardly. Doctors crowded, and with much ado the man's life was saved. Now St Becky nursed her husband tenderly to health, and upbraided him not; but she said these words, and they reformed him:—"*My dear, take wine, and bless your heart with it—but wine in moderation: else, never forget that the bee's wing of to-day becomes the wasp's sting of to-morrow.*"

ST LILY

St Lily was the wife of a poor man, who tried to support his family—and the children were many—by writing books.

But in those days it was not as easy for a man to find a publisher as to say his paternoster. Many were the books that were written by the husband of St Lily; but to every book St Lily gave at least two babes. However, blithe as the cricket was the spirit that ruled about the hearth of St Lily. And how she helped her helpmate! She smiled sunbeams into his ink bottle, and turned his goose pen to the quill of a dove! She made the paper he wrote on as white as her name, and as fragrant as her soul. And when folks wondered how St Lily managed so lightly with fortune's troubles, she always answered, that she never heeded them, for *troubles were like babies, and only grew the bigger by nursing.*

ST FANNY

St Fanny was a notable housewife. Her house was a temple of neatness. Kings might have dined upon her staircase! Now her great delight was to provide all things comfortable for her husband, a hard-working merchant, much abroad, but loving his home. Now one night he returned tired and hungry, and, by some mischance, there was nothing for supper. Shops were shut; and great was the grief of St Fanny. Taking off a bracelet of seed pearl she said, "*I'd give this ten times over for a supper for my husband.*" And every pearl straightway became an oyster, and St Fanny opened—the husband ate—and lo! in every oyster was a pearl as big as a hazel nut; and so was St Fanny made rich for life.

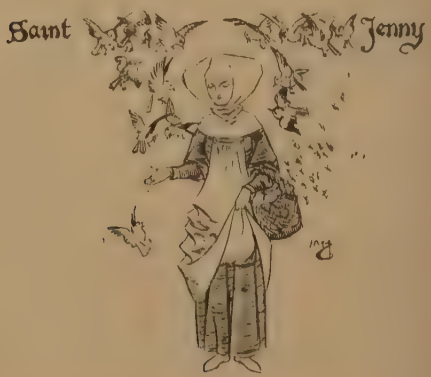
ST FLORENCE OR ST NIGHTINGALE

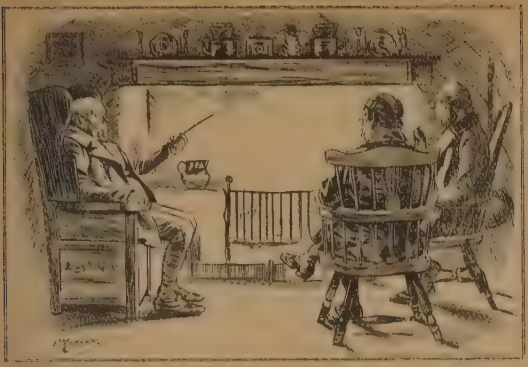
St Florence, by her works, had her lips blessed with comforting, and her hands touched with healing; and she crossed the sea, and built hospitals, and solaced, and restored. And so long as English mistletoe gathers beneath it truthful hearts, and English holly brightens

happy eyes, so long will Englishmen, at home or abroad, on land or on the wave —so long, in memory of that Eastern Christmas, will they cry—*God bless St Florence! Bless St Nightingale!*

ST JENNY

St Jenny was wedded to a very poor man; they had scarcely bread to keep them; but Jenny was of so sweet a temper that even want bore a bright face, and Jenny always smiled. In the worst seasons Jenny would spare crumbs for the birds, and sugar for the bees. Now it so happened that one autumn a storm rent their cot in twenty places apart; when, behold, between the joists, from the basement to the roof, there was nothing but honeycomb and honey - a little fortune for St Jenny and her husband, in honey. Now some said it was the bees, but more declared it was the sweet temper of St Jenny that had filled the poor man's house with honey.





CAT-AND-FIDDLE MORALITIES

The Tale of a Tiger

For fifteen years had the large wooden arm-chair of the Cat-and-Fiddle been consecrated to the use of Captain Bam. He would sit in it as it were a throne; and the customary guests of the hostelry paid him affectionate loyalty. He had won all hearts by his odd, kind ways; he had become the familiar oracle of all by his strange, yet wise sayings. He had, too, the rare and happy knack of so mixing his wisdom with his drollery, that when men laughed and swallowed his jest, they also, like children cheated with sweetened physic, swallowed something that in proper season would do them hearty good. And then there was a mystery about Captain Bam; and, at times, mystery is a sort of sauce to human character. It will now and then give a strange relish to what without it would be insipid commonplace. Not that it was so with Captain Bam. Certainly not; but the mystery was this. Fifteen years before—on a sharp, wintry afternoon—he crossed the threshold of the Cat-and-Fiddle. He carried a small leathern

pack, and appeared otherwise appointed for a long pilgrimage. It was, we say, sharp, blighting weather, and Captain Bam called hastily for a mug of ale. "A mug of ale, and directly," said Captain Bam, "for I can't stop a minute." The ale was brought, and the Captain hastily took a long draught thereof. He then drew his breath, and a smile as from the very roots of his heart broke over his face, and his eye strangely glimmered and twinkled upon the landlord. "*Eureka!*" said Captain Bam, and the host looked. "*Eureka!*" again exclaimed the Captain. "Take my pack," he said, in a voice trembling with the fulness of satisfaction, "take my pack—I will rest here."

And Captain Bam—his pack removed—sank in the large arm-chair. It seemed that his travels were ended; that, in a happy moment, he had accomplished the purpose of his life; that all his future existence would be an appointed state of rest. There was a little wooden nook—a sort of summer-house, at the end of a long garden—which, after few words, he hired of the host; whence every night he came to bestow his talk upon the guests of the Cat-and-Fiddle. "And how he would talk! Ha! better than a printed book." Such was the oft avowed opinion of his gladdened hearers. And now the Captain is dead. His body lies in the churchyard of the market town, but two miles distant from the Cat-and-Fiddle. He had himself written his epitaph. It is a model of brief simplicity—enough to bring a blush into the cheek of many a stone-faced cherub. The epitaph has only one word: it is this: "BAM."

The Captain died, but not his stories. No; there sat every night in the fireside corner of the Cat-and-Fiddle an ardent, passionate lover of the mind of Bam. He was a silent Pylades—a mute Pythias. He would sit and store himself with the syllables of Bam; then, like the bee, would he fly rejoicing home, and ere he slept hive the

wisdom in enduring ink. That wisdom is now before us. The little vellum-bound book, its pages finely written as with the point of a needle, lies upon our desk. Upon the forehead of its title-page there are these words, "CAT-AND-FIDDLE MORALITIES"; touchingly recollectful of the genial haunt where their fine wisdom was audible.

There are—no, we will not tell the number of stories enshrined in this little book. But from time to time we will lay one before the reader, in what we believe to be the very words of Bam.

Yes: we will begin with the first. Here it is—the title beautifully engrossed, from which we guess the legal yearnings of the chronicler—here it is.

THE TALE OF A TIGER

Perhaps, my friends, you have never heard of a place called Singapore. Well, it's no matter if you haven't. It's a long, long way east, where all sorts of shipping trade, and where all sorts of people live—Chinamen, Malays, Javanese, Bengalees, English, Dutch, and what not. Well, there was at Singapore a certain Dutch family in the pepper trade. They were named Vandervermin. They were all rich, cautious, heavy people; all save Jacob Vandervermin, who when a mere youth was left a poor orphan; left, as it might have seemed, on purpose to exercise the loving benevolence of prosperous uncles and aunts, and flourishing cousins. Alas! the whole body of the Vandervermins considered the poverty of Jacob as a blight—a family reproach; a nuisance that every one sought to put off upon the other. Jacob was the little toe of clay that disgraced the Vandervermin body of brass. And what made him worse, he was, for one with Dutch blood in his veins, a sprightly, frolicsome fellow. He was a beggar, and yet, with a stony hardness of heart—as Peter Vandervermin, the head of the family,

declared—he would laugh and make offensive jokes upon his wretchedness. There are men who cannot understand a joke, simply because it is a thing that carries no worth with it in a ledger. Now Peter Vandervermin received a joke—especially the joke of a poor man—as an offence to his judgment and a sidelong sneer at his pocket. His wife, Drusilla Vandervermin, was of the same belief; and in this goodly creed man and wife had reared a numerous family. Jacob Vandervermin was the only outcast of the name who had ever disgraced it by a jest. It was plain he would come to no good; plain that he would die the death of a sinner. When one day his body was found mortally mangled by a tiger, not one of the Vandervermins was shocked or surprised. No: they had always said that something dreadful would happen to him, and it had come about. Jacob was buried—handsomely buried. Not one of the Vandervermins would have given him when alive the value of a coffin nail; but, being dead, the case was altered. The pride of the family was concerned in the funeral; hence, they respected themselves in their treatment of the deceased. Doubtless the ghost of a despised, ill-used relation is propitiated by a costly burial; and thus many a cousin or half-brother who has glided through life in a cobweb coat has superfine cloth upon his coffin.

I had this history of Jacob Vandervermin from a Chinaman. He repeated it to me with the eloquence and fervour of a believer. The Chinamen—at least the sort that live at Singapore—believe that when the tiger kills its first man, his ghost becomes its very slave; bound, ordered by fate to be a sort of jackal to the tiger; compelled by destiny to find the beast its dinners, even among his kith and kin. Hence, a tiger having carried off one of a family, not one of the survivors is from that moment safe. My Chinaman—he passed for a very learned fellow among his tribe—had

the most intimate knowledge of the Vandervermin tragedy, which, after his own lofty fashion—painting his story as though he was painting his native porcelain—he related to me. I shall give it you in plain, cold English; for, my good friends all, be it known to you, I scorn the flourish of a traveller.

At the age of eighteen Jacob Vandervermin—having been knocked from uncle to uncle, the poor, passive family shuttlecock—fell at length into the counting-house of his richest, and oldest uncle, Peter. For two years did Jacob eat the bread of dependence; for with that bitter word was his bread always buttered—when he awakened the inextinguishable ire of his rich and orderly relative. Jacob had been guilty of a gross wickedness; in fact, of a crime, in the eyes of Peter Vandervermin, of the deepest dye. He had, in a moment of culpable neglect, let fall a large, unsightly blot of ink upon his uncle's ledger. To the mind of Peter Vandervermin, his graceless nephew had thrown an indelible stain upon the white reputation of the family; at least Peter so avenged the fault, for without a word he seized a ruler that lay upon the desk, and with it smote the skull of the blotting offender. Jacob uttered no syllable; but instantly closing the ledger, and raising it with both his hands, he brought down the book of figures with such precise vehemence upon the head of his uncle, that the principal of the house of Vandervermin & Co. lay stunned and prostrate on the floor of his own temple—that is, of his own counting-house.

Now Jacob was not a man to give unnecessary trouble. He knew that if he remained it would only cause his uncle the pain and the perplexity of thrusting him from the house, and therefore, with scarcely a penny in his purse, did Jacob don his hat and cross his uncle's threshold.

Vain was it for him to beg the aid of any of the name of Vandervermin. What, he—a poor creature, too, a pauper,

a beggar, a—no, there was no worse word for him—he smite so good, so tender an uncle! No, he might starve, perish; it would be to share his wickedness to relieve him. It was a secret comfort to the Vandervermins that Jacob, in a momentary forgetfulness, had knocked down his uncle. That sacrilegious blow had for ever and for ever snapped the thousand fine ties that—despite of his previous errors—still held him to the family heart. Now he might perish; and the sooner the better. The only hope was that he would be drowned, or decently starved to death; that, for the sake of the family, he would not come to be hanged, however richly he deserved it.

For some weeks Jacob continued to live without money. Nothing, perhaps, so eminently shows the superiority, the crowning greatness of the human animal—a fact so well attested in many cases—as the power of man to subsist for a time without cash. He is a self-wonder while he does it; nevertheless, the miracle is performed. Tear a plant up by the roots—fling it aside—and it perishes. Shut a cat up in an empty, mouseless garret, and one by one her nine lives will go out. But take money from man—money, which is the root of evil, a root upon which man best flourishes, thereby proving the wickedness of his nature—and still, still he lives. Perhaps, somehow, the carnivorous, omnivorous animal becomes an air-plant, and so feeds upon the atmosphere about him. I have met with many air-plants of the sort. There is not a city, a town, without them. Such men get over days, and weeks, and months, and wonder how they have so successfully travelled thus far to the grave. They must rub their hands, that they have cheated what seemed to them a vital principle of nature.

And in this way Jacob Vandervermin lived. Every day seemed to him a difficult stepping-stone to get over, and yet the night saw him on the other side of it. But it is hard,

miserable work, this keeping check against time by meals in the bowels: this incessant looking for butcher and baker as the allies against death, and wondering and trembling from day to day, lest they should not come to the rescue. My friends, this is hard, debasing work—I have known it.

One day, with thoughts heavy as lead upon his brain, did Jacob Vandervermin wander forth. He wandered and wandered, until, weary and spent, he sank upon the stump of a tree in a desolate place. "How—how," cried Jacob, "shall I live another day!"

What a mole-eyed thing is man! How he crucifies himself with vain thoughts—how he stands upon tiptoe, straining his eyestrings, trying to look into the future, when at that moment the play is over—the show is done.

Jacob had scarcely uttered—"How shall I live another day!" when a tiger, a royal tiger—wherefore a cruel, treacherous, bloodthirsty beast should be called royal, I know not—when a royal tiger—fell like a thunderbolt upon him.

As a very large tom-cat snaps in its mouth a very small mouse, and looking statelily around seems to say—the mouse kicking all the while—"Pooh, pooh; why this is nothing!" so did the royal tiger look and speak, with Jacob Vandervermin writhing and screaming in its jaw. Well, tigers make short work of men. Almost as short as man himself sometimes makes of his fellow biped. Jacob Vandervermin—it was his luck to meet with a benevolent tiger; he was not played with before he was finally crunched—Jacob Vandervermin was soon dead.

And now, my friends, prepare for a wonder! Long before the tiger had picked the bones of Jacob—Jacob's ghost stood, like a waiting footman, meekly behind the dining animal. There was Jacob in his wide, parasol-like hat of straw—his white jacket and trousers, in all things the

same as when he lived, save that he was so transparent the eye could see through him: and then his look was so serene and passionless! It was odd to see how meekly the ghost looked on the while the tiger gnawed and crunched, and then with its rasping tongue cleaned the bones of the ghost's late body. It was plain that the ghost cared no more for what he once thought the most valuable thing under heaven, than if it were an old threadbare coat, put aside for a glorious garment. Thus, after a few minutes, the ghost seated itself upon the stump of the tree—where, a short time before, it had sat in the flesh—and twiddling its thumbs, looked composedly about it. And when the tiger had finished Jacob—for the poor animal had not for a week before tasted so much as a field mouse—it stalked away to its den, the ghost of Jacob following it.

Gorged to the whiskers, almost for two whole days did the tiger sleep. And then rising and stretching itself—like a Mogul after a debauch—the tiger said, "Jacob!"

"What wills my lord?" answered Jacob's ghost.

"Jacob, I must sup: something nice, now—something delicate. I don't like to say it to your face, Jacob, but you haven't quite agreed with me. I could fancy something mild and tender to-night."

For a moment the ghost was thoughtful; then observed, "What says my lord to a nice sugar-cane salad?"

The tiger leered somewhat pityingly at the ghost; then saying "Look here!" opened its jaws. Even the ghost of Jacob shivered—like moonlight upon water—at the dreadful array of teeth. "Think you," said the tiger, "such teeth were made for salads?"

"Tigers, I have heard, were not always flesh-eaters," said the ghost, a little boldly.

"Why, there is a story among tigers," answered the ingenuous brute, "that at one time—but it's a long time ago—

'Almost for two whole days did the tiger sleep'

we used to crop clover and trefoil and wild thyme, for all the world like foolish little lambs. And then suddenly—but how it came about I never heard—we took to eating the kids and lambkins that before we played with. How the change began, and who took to killing first, I know not: I have only heard it wasn't tigers; and now, I only know that I must sup: that this very night I must have another Vandervermin. Have you any babies in the house?"

"None: I assure you, my lord, not one," answered the ghost.

"That's a pity," said the tiger, "for I feel it, my stomach needs something tender and succulent. However, lead on: air and exercise may tone my vitals a little. Why do you tarry, sirrah?"—and the tiger growled like a stage tyrant—"you know your destiny; lead on."

The ghost seemed to feel the truthful force of the rebuke, and immediately led the way. As they walked

on, the ghost espied a remarkably fine ox, strayed from a neighbouring farm. "See, my lord, see!" cried the shadow.

"No, no," said the tiger, a little contemptuously. "I can't do that sort of thing now: having once tasted the goodness of man, I must go on with him. No, no; I thank my luck I now know what good living really is." And then the tiger paused, and twisting its tail gracefully about its legs, as sometimes an ingenuous maid will twist about a gown flounce, the brute observed—"What a lovely night! How the air freshens one's spirits! What a beautiful moon—and how the stars shine—and the airs whisper among the tamarind trees, like unseen fairies making love! You are sure, Jacob, there is not a baby in the house?"

"Nothing like it, my lord," answered Jacob.

"What is the best you can promise me?" asked the tiger.

"To-night, I'm afraid nothing better than Drusilla, my aunt," said the ghost. The tiger growled dubiously; and then said, "Well, we can but look at her. You know the safest way—so mind what you're about."

Cautiously, stealthily, goaded by fate, did the ghost of Jacob lead the tiger to the mansion of Peter Vandervermin. Leaping a low wall, they gained a garden, and proceeded along a winding walk, until they came to a pretty little summer pavilion, wherein sat aunt Drusilla, as was her wont, knitting, with a large Dutch pug at her feet.

"There's your supper," said Jacob, pointing to the withered old gentlewoman.

"Humph!" growled the tiger, and angrily twitched its tail—"humph! It's against my stomach; I can't do it."

"What think you," urged the ghost, "of the pug just for a snack?"

The tiger curled its whiskers with a look of disgust, and

growling "dropsical," turned supperless away. And all the next night did the tiger fast. But sweet is the sauce of hunger; for on the third evening the tiger rose and stretched itself, and its eyes glared with brightening flame as it said—"Come along, Jacob: I don't know that the old woman will eat badly after all."

Jacob again conducted the destroyer to the house. Again showed Drusilla, unconscious of her fate, knitting, knitting. There was a slight growl—a spring—an old woman's scream—a yap, yap from the pug—and then the wall was leapt—and Peter Vandervermin was a widower.

I will not follow the tiger to its banquet. Suffice it to say, the tiger ate and slept. However, very ill and feverish did the tiger awake in the morning. "Jacob," cried the tiger, "what's the matter with me? Phew! I can hardly move."

"Perhaps," said Jacob, "my lord has just a stitch in his side."

"No, no," said the tiger, "I feel 'em now; it's that abominable old woman's knitting needles."

"Every rose has its thorn, my lord," said the ghost, joking as a ghost may be supposed to joke. "You never find a woman without pins and needles."

"Jacob," cried the tiger, "either you come of a very bad family, or, after all, man-eating is by no means so wholesome—however pleasant it may be—as a hearty, simple meal off a buffalo, a deer, or anything of that sort."

"Then why, my lord," urged the ghost, "why not return to the humbler diet?"

"That's all very well, Jacob. Why don't men—with red noses and no insides—turn from arrack and new rum, and drink only at the diamond spring? I begin to feel myself no better than a drunkard: yes, I fear I'm a lost tiger. It's very nice—very delicious to eat a man at night—but it's

like what I've heard of drink—what a headache it leaves in the morning! Ha!" cried the beast, "I'm afraid I'm making quite a man of myself. Look at my tongue, Jacob; it's as hard and as dry, you might grind an axe upon it. Oh, that dreadful old woman!"—and the tiger closed its heavy, bloodshot eyes, and tried to sleep.

Only three days past, and then the tiger leapt up, and licking itself all over—as though it was going out to an evening party, and wished to put the very best gloss upon its coat—the creature cried—"Come away, Jacob; I must have another Vandervermin."

"Oh, my lord," cried the ghost, "think what you'll suffer in the morning."

"*That* for the morning," cried the tiger, whisking its tail—"I tell you, Jacob, I intend to make a night of it. Slave, lead on."

And thus for three months, conducted by the fate-enforced ghost, did the tiger continue to sup off Vandervermins. Uncles and aunts, cousins male and female, in all eight, had the tiger devoured, when one night the brute carried off the ninth and last victim in the person of Justus Vandervermin, lawyer and usurer. The tiger—strange to say—devoured every bit of him; but it was the brute's last morsel; it never could digest him. Justus Vandervermin remained, like so much india-rubber, in the vitals of the tiger. Nothing could stir the lawyer.

"Jacob," cried the brute, feeling its last hour approach. "I shall die, and your ghost will be at rest. I forgive you—but why—why didn't you tell me that Justus was a lawyer?"

And with these words the tiger died, and the ghost of Jacob Vandervermin was instantly at peace.

"And if all this story isn't true, Captain"—asked one of

the Cat-and-Fiddle company—"what do you get out of it?"

"Why, true or not, this much," answered Captain Bam; "never to neglect and ill-use a poor relation. For however low and helpless he may seem, the day may come when he shall have about him the strength of a tiger."

A GOSSIP AT RECULVERS

The spirit of the Saxon seems still to linger along the shores of Kent. There is the air of antiquity about them; a something breathing of the olden day—an influence, surviving all the changes of time, all the vicissitudes of politic and social life. The genius of the Heptarchy comes closer upon us from the realm of shadows; the Wittenagemote is not a convocation of ghosts—not a venerable House of Mists; but a living, talking, voting Parliament. We feel a something old, strong, stubborn, hearty; a something for the intense meaning of which we have no other word than "English" rising about us from every rood of Kent. And wherefore this? England was not made piecemeal. Her foundations in the deep—could a sea of molten gold purchase the worth of her surrounding ocean?—are of the same age. The same sun has risen and set upon the whole island. Wherefore, then, is Kent predominant in the mind for qualities which the mind denies to other counties? Because it is still invested with the poetry of action. Because we feel that Kent was the cradle of the marrow and bone of England; because we still see, ay, as palpably as we behold yonder trail of ebon smoke

—the broad black pennant of that mighty admiral, Steam —the sails of Cæsar threatening Kent, and Kent barbarians clustering on the shore, defying him. It is thus that the spirit of past deeds survives immortally, and works upon the future: it is thus we are indissolubly linked to the memories of the bygone day by the still active soul that once informed it.

How rich in thoughts — how fertile in fancies that quicken the brain and dally with the heart, is every foot-pace of the soil! Reader, be with us for a brief time at this beautiful village of Herne. The sky is sullen; and summer, like a fine yet froward wench, smiles now and then, now frowns the blacker for the passing brightness: nevertheless, summer in her worst mood cannot spoil the beautiful features of this demure, this antique village. It seems a very nest—warm and snug, and green—for human life; with the twilight haze of time about it, almost consecrating it from the aching hopes and feverish expectations of the present. Who would think that the bray and roar of multitudinous London sounded but some sixty miles away? The church stands peacefully, reverently, like some old visionary monk, his feet on earth—his thoughts with God. And the graves are all about; and things of peace and gentleness, like folded sheep, are gathered round it.

There is a stile which man might make the throne of solemn thought—his pregnant matter, the peasant bones that lie beneath. And on the other side, a park, teeming with beauty; with sward green as emeralds, and soft as a mole's back; and trees, with centuries circulating in their gnarled massiveness.

But we must quit the churchyard, and turning to the right, we will stroll towards Reculvers. How rich the swelling meadows! How their green breasts heave with conceived fertility! And on this side corn-fields; the

grain stalk thick as a reed; the crop level and compact as a green bank. And here, too, is a field of canary seed: of seed grown for London birds in London cages. The farmer shoots the sparrow—the little rustic scoundrel—that with felonious bill would carry away one grain sown for, made sacred to, Portman Square canary! We might, perhaps, find a higher parallel to this did we look with curious eyes about us. Nevertheless, bumpkin sparrow has his world of air to range in; his free loves; and for his nest his ivied wall or hawthorn bush. These, say the worst, are a happy set-off even against a gilt-wired cage; sand like diamond dust; unfailing seed, and sugar from even the sweeter lips of lady mistress. Powder and small shot may come upon the sparrow like apoplexy upon an alderman, with the unbolted morsel in its gullet; yet, consider—hath the canary no danger to encounter? Doth not prosperity keep a cat?

Well, this idle gossip has brought us within a short distance of Reculvers. Here—so goes the hoary legend—Augustine impressed the first Christian foot upon the English shore, sent hither by good Pope Gregory; no less good that, if the same legend be true, he had a subtle sense of a joke. Christianity, unless historians say what is not, owes somewhat of its introduction into heathen England to a pun. The story is so old that there is not a schoolmaster's dog throughout merry Britain that could not bark it. Nevertheless, we will indicate our moral courage by repeating it. Our ink turns red with blushes at the thought—no matter—for once we will write in our blushes.

Pope Gregory, seeing some white-haired, pink-cheeked boys for sale in the Roman slave-market, asked who they were? *Sunt Angli*—they are English, was the response. *Non sunt Angli—sed Angeli*; they are not English, but angels, was the Papal playfulness. His Holiness then inquired from what part of England. *Deirii*, they are

"Sugar from even the sweeter lips of lady mistress"

Deirians, was the answer. Whereupon the pope, following up his vein of pleasantry, said, *Non Deirii, sed De ira*—not Deirians, but from the anger of the Lord: snatched, as his Holiness indicated, from the vengeance that must always light upon heathenism.

This grey-haired story, like the grey hairs of Nestor, is pregnant with practical wisdom. Let us imagine Pope Gregory to have been a dull man; even for a pope a dull man. Let us allow that his mind had not been sufficiently comprehensive to take within its circle the scattered lights of intelligence, which, brought into a focus, make a joke. Suppose, in a word, that the pope had had no ear for a pun? Saint Augustine might still have watched the bubbles upon Tiber, and never have been sea-sick on his English voyage.

What does this prove? What does this incident preach with a thunder-tongue? Why, the necessity, the vital necessity, of advancing no man to any sort of dignity, who is not all alive as an eel to a joke. We are convinced of it. The world will never be properly ruled, until jests entirely supersede the authority of Acts of Parliament. As it is, the Acts are too frequently the jests, without the fun.

We are now close to Reculvers. There, reader, there—where you see that wave leaping up to kiss that big white stone—that is the very spot where Saint Augustine put down the sole of his Catholic foot. If it be not, we have been misinformed and cheated of our money; we can say no more.

Never mind the spot. Is there not a glory lighting up the whole beach? Is not every wave of silver—every little stone, a shining crystal? Doth not the air vibrate with harmonies, strangely winding into the heart, and awakening the brain! Are we not under the spell of the imagination which makes the present vulgarity melt away

like morning mists, and shows to us the full, uplighted glory of the past?

There was a landing on the Sussex Coast; a landing of a Duke of Normandy, and a horde of armed cut-throats. Looking at them even through the distance of some eight hundred years, what are they but as a gang of burglars? A band of pick-purses—blood-shedders—robbers!

What was this landing of a host of men, in the full trump and blazonry of war—what all their ships, their minstrelsey, and armed power—to the advent of Augustine and his fellow-monks, brought hither by the forlornness of the soul of man? it is this thought that makes this bit of pebbled beach a sacred spot; it is this spirit of meditation that hears in every little wave a sweet and solemn music.

And there, where the ocean tumbles, was in the olden day a goodly town, sapped, swallowed by the wearing, the voracious sea. At lowest tides the people still discover odd, quaint, household relics, which, despite the homely breeding of the finders, must carry away their thoughts into the mist of time, and make them feel antiquity. The very children of the village are hucksters of the spoils of dead centuries. They grow up with some small trading knowledge of fossils; and are deep, very deep in all sorts of petrifactions. They must have strange early sympathies towards that mysterious town with all its tradesfolk and market-folk sunk below the sea; a place of which they have a constant inkling in the petty spoils lashed upwards by the tempest. Indeed, it is difficult for the mind to conceive the annihilation of a whole town, engulfed in the ocean. The tricksy fancy will assert itself; and looking over the shining water, with summer basking on it, we are apt to dream that the said market-town has only suffered a "sea-change"; and that fathoms deep, the town still stands —that busy life goes on—that people of an odd, sea-green aspect, it may be, still carry on the work of mortal breath-

ing; make love, beget little ones, and die. But this, indeed, is the dream of idleness. Yet, who—if he could change his mind at will, would make his mind incapable of such poor fantasies? How much of the coarse web of existence owes its beauty to the idlest dreams with which we colour it!

The village of Reculvers is a choice work of antiquity. The spirit of King Ethelbert tarries there still, and lives enshrined in the sign of a public-house. It would be well for all kings could their spirits survive with such genial associations. There are some dead royalties too profitless even for a public sign. Who, now, with any other choice would empty a tankard under the auspices of Bloody Mary, as that anointed "femininitie" is called; or take a chop even at Nero's Head? No; inn-keepers know the subtle prejudices of man, nor violate the sympathies of life with their sign-posts.

Here, on the sanded floor of King Ethelbert's hostelry, do village antiquarians often congregate. Here, at times, are stories told—stories not all unworthy of the type of Antiquarian *Transactions*—of *fibulæ*, talked of as buckles, and other tangible bits of Roman history. Here, we have heard, how a certain woman—living at this blessed hour, and the mother of a family—went out at very low tide, and found the branch of a filbert-tree with clustering filberts on it, all stone, at least a thousand years old—and more. Here, too, have we heard of a wonderful horse-shoe, picked up by Joe Squellins; a shoe, as the finder averred, as old as the world. Poor Joe! What was his reward?—it may be, a pint of ale for that inestimable bit of iron! And yet was he a working antiquarian. Joe Squellins had within him the unchristened elements of F.S.A.

The sea has spared something of the old churchyard; although it has torn open the sad sanctity of the grave, and reveals to the day, corpse upon corpse—layers of the dead, thickly, closely packed, body upon body. A lateral view

of rows of skeletons, entombed in Christian earth centuries since, for a moment staggers the mind, with this inward peep of the grave. We at once see the close, dark prison of the churchyard, and our breath comes heavily, and we shudder. It is only for a moment. There is a lark singing, singing over our head—a mile upwards in the blue heaven—singing like a freed soul: we look again, and smile serenely at the bones of what was man.

Many of our gentle countrymen—fellow-metropolitans—who once a year wriggle out their souls from the slit of their tills to give the immortal essence sea air, make a pilgrimage to Reculvers. This Golgotha, we have noted it, has to them especial attractions. Many are the mortal relics borne away to decorate a London chimney-piece. Many a skeleton gives up its rib, its *ulna*, two or three odd *vertebræ*, or some such gimcrack to the London visitor, for a London ornament. Present the same man with a bone from a London hospital, and he would hold the act abominable, irreligiously presumptuous. But time has "silvered o'er" the bone from Reculvers; has cleansed it from the taint of mortality; has merged the loathsomeness in the curiosity; for time turns even the worst of horrors to the broadest of jests. We have now Guy Fawkes about to blow Lords and Commons into eternity—and now Guy Fawkes masked for a pantomime.

One day, wandering near this open graveyard, we met a boy, carrying away, with exulting looks, a skull in very perfect preservation. He was a London boy, and looked rich indeed with his treasure.

"What have you there?" we asked.

"A man's head—a skull," was the answer.

"And what can you possibly do with a skull?"

"Take it to London."

"And when you have it in London, what then will you do with it?"

"I know."

"No doubt. But what will you do with it?"

And to this thrice-repeated question the boy three times answered, "I know."

"Come, here's sixpence. Now, what will you do with it?"

The boy took the coin—grinned—hugged himself, hugging the skull the closer, and said very briskly, "Make a money box of it!"

A strange thought for a child. And yet, mused we as we strolled along, how many of us, with nature beneficent and smiling on all sides—how many of us think of nothing so much as hoarding sixpences—yea, hoarding them even in the very jaws of desolate Death!

THE TWO WINDOWS

The Union Workhouse of the ancient parish of Herne — how calm and pastoral is that little nook of Kent!—has two outward windows. The fabric, built by the inspiration of the New Poor-law, was a blind, eyeless piece of brickwork; a gaol for the iniquity and perseverance of poverty; a Newgate for the felony of want. The chiefs and elders of Parliament had said, "Let us make abiding-places for the poor; let us separate them, lepers as they are, from the clean; let us shut them up from the sight of the green earth; let them not behold the work of the season in the budding trees, in their leafy branches, in their red and golden robes of autumn, in the gaunt bareness of solemn winter. Let the grass spring and the wild-flower blossom; but let not the poor, the unclean of the land, look upon the work of God." After this resolve the Union was built; with inner windows looking upon walls, and walls turned blank upon the outward world. No crevice, no loophole permitted captive poverty a look, a glimpse of the fresh face of nature; his soul, like his body, was bricked up according to statute; he had by the insol-

ence of destitution offended the niceness of the world, and he was doomed by his judges to a divorce from the commonest rights of earth. Hence, the Union Workhouse turned its sullen, unbroken wall of brick upon the fields and trees, and the pauper was made to look only upon pauperism. The freshness and luxuriance of nature—her prodigal loveliness—was not for his eyes; he was poor, and even to behold the plenteousness of the teeming earth was an enjoyment beyond his state—a banned delight—a luxury which those who paid for his food could not properly vouchsafe him!

At length—when they themselves know it not, men's hearts will work, a sense of right will sometimes steal upon their sleep, an instinct of goodness will, like silver water from the rock, gush forth—at length it was resolved by the guardians of the poor—guardians of the poor! what a holiness of purpose should inform those well-worn syllables—that the dull, blind, squalid workhouse should have light; that its brick walls should be pierced with two windows; that the fields and trees should gladden pauper eyes, appealing to old recollections; childhood thoughts; daily, customary feelings. It was determined that the pauper prisoner should, through the iron bars of penury, have comforting glimpses of God's goodness without; that he should, though all unconsciously, make offerings upon the green altar of the earth; that his heart should commune, in its own unknowing way, with those sweet influences, which, coming from God, discourse in some manner to all men.

And so it was determined that the Union Workhouse should have two outward windows. The guardians of the poor appeared with the labourers. "Here," said the guardians, "break through the wall; here pierce one window—here, another." Then turning to the paupers, some few age-stricken folks, they said, with smug com-

placency, "We are going to give you some light." And this, reader, is not a goosequill fiction; it is a thing of truth.

"We are going to give you some light." We cannot help it, if this liberal goodness—this gentle philanthropy—drive back thought to the first gift of light; if it call up, as with an iron tongue, the memory of the holy birth of light, word-begotten, of all men. And the nature of man, solemnised by such memories—kindled and uplifted, skies beyond expression, by the sublime inheritance—is it not a hard task to consider with composure even the compunction of a guardian of the poor, who pierces with two windows the prison-house of the pauper to let God's light in? May not the small authority of man be sometimes as a blaspheming burlesque of Almighty Beneficence?

Let us, for a time forgetful of state philosophy—forgetful of the plausibilities of social prosperity that set the poor apart from the rich and well-to-do, as creatures somewhat different in the real drama of life, although on certain occasions, as it were for form's sake, for Christian ceremony, allowed to be made from the clay of the same Eden as their masters—let us behold the earth in its freshness, and man, its owner, in the vigour of his new birth, the heir of an impartial Providence, and the receiver of its glories; and then consider him as the task-master of his fellow, as the grudging churl that metes out light and air to his helpless brother; and for this sole cause—this one bitter reason—he *is* helpless.

A miserable sight—a hideous testimony of the thankfulness of prosperous man—is the rural union, with its blank dead wall of brick; a cold, blind thing, the work of human perversity and human selfishness, amidst ten thousand thousand evidences of Eternal bounty. How beautiful is the beauty of God around it! There is not a sapling waving its green tresses of June that does not make the heart

yearn with kindliness; not a field-flower that does not, with its speaking eye, tell of abundant goodness; the brook is musical with the same sweet truth; all sights and sounds declare it. The liberal loveliness of nature, turn where we will, looks upon and whispers to us. We are made the heirs of wealth inexhaustible, of pleasures deep as the sea and pure as the joys of Paradise. And our return for this, our offering to the wretchedness of our fellow-creatures, is yonder prison, with its dead wall turned upon the pleasant aspects of nature, lest the pauper captives within should behold what God has done for that world, in which, according to the world's justice, they have nothing. Hence is the pauper treated, in his blind dungeon, as though there was a felonious purpose in his eyesight; as though, a prisoner in the union, he would commit larceny on the meads and trees, and all the rural objects that from babyhood have been familiar to him, to the exceeding injury and loss of the free folks, who, by the blessing of skill and good luck, have "land and beeves."

We know not a more fantastic tyranny, a more wilful assertion of the arrogance of man, than this needless shutting up of his poorer brother in a gaol of poverty—barring his eyes of every comforting object, compelling him to look only upon that which at every look speaks to his soul of his miserable dependence upon his richer fellow; which denies to him the innocent, unbought glimpse of out-door nature, as though the scene was a land of promise from which his beggary had made him alien. Is human want so wicked that it should be unblessed with even a glance at the pleasant things of creation? Has the pauper—because pauper—no further claim upon the earth, save for his final bed—the grave? The rustic unions, with their forlorn blank walls, cry, yes!

If God punish man for crime, as man punishes man for poverty, woe to the sons of Adam!

THE ORDER OF POVERTY

Why should not Lazarus make to himself an order of tatters? Why should not poverty have its patch of honour? Wherefore should not the undubbed knights of evil fortune carry about them, with a gracious humility, the inevitable types of their valorous contest with the Paynim iniquities of life? Wherefore may not man wear indigence as proudly as nobility flashes its jewels? Is there not a higher heraldry than that of the college?

Not a very long time ago the King of Greece awarded to an Englishman the Order of the Redeemer. The Englishman did not reject the gift; he did not stare with wonder, or smile in meek pity at the grave mockery of the distinction; but winning the consent of our Sovereign Lady Victoria to sport the jewel, the Knight of Christ—knight by the handiwork of the King of Greece—hung about him the Order of the Redeemer.

And what may be the gracious discipline of this Order of Redemption? Has the new knight sold off all that he had, and given the money to the poor? We have heard of no such broker's work; and surely the newspaper

tongue would have given loud utterance to the penitence of Mammon. What discipline, then, does this Order of Christ compel upon its holy and immaculate brotherhood? What glorifying services towards the heart and spirit of man—what self-martyrdom does it recompense? Is it the bright reward of humility—of active loving-kindness towards everything that breathes? Is it that the knighted, beyond ten thousand men, has proved the divine temper of the spiritual follower of Jesus, making his hourly life an active goodness, and with every breath drawn drawing nearer to rewarding Heaven? Surely the Order of the Redeemer—that awful, solemn badge, setting apart its wearer from the sordid crowd of earth—could only be vouchsafed to some hard Christian service—could only reward some triumphant wrestling of the suffering soul—some wondrous victory in the forlorn hope of this dark struggling life. These are our thoughts—these our passionate words; whereupon the herald of the court of Greece—a grave, fantastic wizard—with mildly-reproving look and most delicate speech, says: "You are wrong: quite wrong. The Order of the Redeemer, though by no means the first Order, is a very pretty Order in its way. Six months since we gave it to Captain Jonquil, from Paris; and truly no man more deserved the Order of the Redeemer. He taught His Majesty's infantry the use of the bayonet: his howitzer practice, too, is a divine thing. Captain Jonquil is a great soldier. Last week the Order of the Redeemer was also bestowed upon Andreas, a great favourite at court—but, if the naughty truth must be told, a pimp."

Alas! is heraldry always innocent of blasphemy?

On the 13th of June 1843, a grave masque—a solemn ceremony—was held at the court of St James. Heraldry again looked smug and pompous. A knight was to be made of "the most ancient Order of the Thistle." Let

us make a clean breast of our ignorance; we assert nothing against the antiquity of the Thistle; for what we know, it may be as old—ay, as old as asses. But upon the glad 13th of June a chapter was held, and John, Marquis of Bute, and the Right Hon. William, Earl of Mansfield, were elected knights. They of course took the oaths to protect and succour distressed maidens, orphans and widows; to abstain from every sort of wrong, and to do every sort of right.

"The Marquis of Bute then kneeling near the Sovereign, and Mr Woods on his knee, presenting to the Queen the riband and jewel of the Order, Her Majesty was graciously pleased to place the same over the noble Marquis's left shoulder. His Lordship rising, kissed the Sovereign's hand, and having received the congratulations of the knights brethren, retired."

From that moment John, Marquis of Bute, looked and moved with the aspect and bearing of a man, radiant with new honours. He was a Knight of the Thistle, and the jewel sparkling at his bosom feebly typified the bright, admiring looks of the world—the gaze of mingled love and admiration bent upon him. But on this earth—in this abiding-place of equity—men do not get even thistles for nothing. It may, indeed, happen that desert may pant and moan without honour; but in the court of kings, where justice weighs with nicest balance, honour never with its smiles mocks imbecility, or gilds with outward lustre a concealed rottenness. Honour never gives alms, but awards justice. Mendicancy, though with liveried lackies clustering at its carriage—and there is such pauperism—may whine and pray its hardest, yet move not the inflexible herald. He awards those jewels to virtue, which virtue has sweated, bled for. And it is with this belief, yea, in the very bigotry of the creed, we ask—what has John, Marquis of Bute, fulfilled to earn

his thistle? What, the Right Hon. William, Earl of Mansfield? What dragon wrong has either overcome? What giant Untruth stormed in Sophist Castle? What necromantic wickedness baffled and confounded? Yet, these battles have been fought—these triumphs won; oh! who shall doubt them? Be sure of it, ye unbelieving demagogues—scoffing plebians, not for nothing nobility browses upon thistles.

We pay all honour to these inventions, these learned devices of the Herald. They doubtless clothe, comfort, and adorn humanity, which, without them, would be cold, naked, shrunk, and squalid. They, moreover, gloriously attest the supremacy of the tame, the civilised man, over the wild animal. The orders of the Herald are *tattoo* without the pain of puncture. The New Zealander carries his knighthood, lined and starred and flowered, in his visage. The civilised knight hangs it more conveniently on a riband.

We are such devout believers in the efficacy of Orders, that we devote this small essay to an attempt to make them, under some phase or other, universal. We will not linger in a consideration of the Orders already dead; lovely was their life, and as fragrant is their memory. There was one Order—Teutonic, if we mistake not, the Order of Fools. There was a quaint sincerity in the very title of this brotherhood. Its philosophy was outspeaking; and more than all, the constitution of such a chapter admitted knights against whose worthiness, whose peculiar right to wear the badge, no envious demagogue could say his bitter saying. Surely, in our reverence for the wisdom of antiquity, this Order might have resurrection. The Fool might have his bauble newly varnished—his cap newly hung with tinkling bells. Some of us chirp and cackle of the wisdom of the by-gone day; but that is only wisdom which jumps with our own cunning; which fortifies

us in the warm and quiet nook of some hallowed prejudice. From the mere abstract love of justice, we should be right glad to have the Order of Fools revived in the fullest splendour of Folly. Such an Order would so beneficently provide for many unrewarded public idlers—ay, and public workers.

There was a time when the world in its first childhood needed playthings. Then was the Herald the world's toy-maker, and made for it pretty little nick-knacks—golden fleeces—stars, ribands and garters; tempting the world to follow the kickshaws, as nurse with sugared bread-and-butter tempts the yeanling to try its tottering feet. The world has grown old—old and wise: yet is not the Herald bankrupt, but like a pedlar at a fair, draws the hearts of simple men after the shining, silken glories in his box. Meanwhile, philosophy in hodden grey, laughs at the crowd, who bellow back the laugh and sometimes pelt the reverend fool for his irreligious humour: for he who believes not in Stars and Garters is unbeliever; to the world's best and brighest faith, atheist and scoffer.

Is it not strange that a man should think the better of himself for a few stones glittering in his bosom? That a costly band about the leg should make the blood dance more swiftly through the arteries? That a man seeing his breast set with jewellers' stars should think them glorious as the stars of heaven—himself, little less than an earthly god, so deified? If these things be really types and emblems of true greatness, what rascal poverty besets the man without them! How is he damned in his baseness! What mere offal of humanity, the biped without an Order! And, therefore, let stars be multiplied; and let nobility—like bees—suck honey from Thistles!

We are, however, confirmed in our late failing faith. We are bigoted to Orders. Men, like watches, must work the better upon jewels. Man is, at the best, a puppet;

and is only put into dignified motion when pulled by Blue or Red Ribands. Now, as few, indeed, of us can get stars, garters or ribands, let us have Orders of our own. Let us, with invincible self-complacency, ennoble ourselves.

In the hopeless ignorance and vulgarity of our first prejudice, we might possibly want due veneration for the Golden Fleece; an ancient and most noble Order, worn by few. Yet with all our worst carelessness towards the Order, we never felt for it the same pitying contempt we feel towards an Order worn by many—not at their button-holes, not outside their breasts, but in the very core of their hearts—the Order of the Golden Calf.

Oh! bowelless Plutus, what a host of Knights! What a lean-faced, low-browed, thick-jowled, swag-bellied brotherhood! Deformity, in all its fantastic variety, meets in the chapter. They wear no armour of steel or brass, but are cased in the magic mail of impenetrable Bank-paper. They have no sword, no spear, no iron mace with spikes; but they ride merrily into the fight of life, swinging about gold-gutted purses, and levelling with the dust rebellious poverty. These are the Knights of the Golden Calf. It is a glorious community. What a look of easy triumph they have! With what serene self-satisfaction they measure the wide distance between mere paupers—the Knights of the Order of Nothing—and themselves! How they walk the earth as if they alone possessed the patent of walking upright! How they dilate in the light of their own gold, like adders in the sun!

A most fatal honour is this Order of the Golden Calf. It is worn unseen, as we have said, in the hearts of men; but its effects are visible: the disease speaks out in every atom of flesh—poor human worm's-meat!—and throbs in every muscle. It poisons the soul; gives the eye a squint; takes from the face of fellow-man its God-gifted dignity, and makes him a thing to prey upon; to work, to use up;

to reduce to so much hard cash; then to be put up, with a wary look of triumph, into the pocket. This Order damns with a leprosy of soul its worshipper. It blinds and deafens him to the glories and the harmonies ministrant to poorer men. His eye is jaundiced, and in the very stars of God he sees nought but twinkling guineas.

At this moment great is the Order throughout the land! Tyrannous its laws, reckless its doings. It is strong, and why should it be just? To be of this Order is now the one great striving of life. They alone are men who wear the jewel—wretches they without it. Man was originally made from the dust of the earth: he is now formed of a richer substance: the true man is made of gold. Yes, the regenerate Adam is struck only at the Mint.

The Knights of the Order of the Golden Calf have no formal ceremony of election; yet has brother knight almost instinctive knowledge of brother. In the solitude of his own thoughts is he made one of the community; in utter privacy he kisses the pulseless hand of Plutus, and swears to his supremacy. The oath divorces him from pauper-life —from its cares, its wants, its sympathies. He is privileged from the uneasiness of thought, the wear and tear of anxiety for fellow-man; he is compact and self-concentrated in his selfishness. Nought ruffles him that touches not that inmost jewel of his soul, his knighthood's Order.

In the olden day the Knights of the Fleece, the Garter and other glories, won their rank upon the battle-field—blood and strife being to them the hand-maids of honour. The chivalry of the Golden Calf is mild and gentle. It splits no brain-pan, spills no blood; yet is it ever fighting. We are at the exchange. Look at that easy, peaceful man. What a serenity is upon his cheek! What a mild lustre in his eye! How plainly is he habited! He wears the livery of simplicity and the look of peace. Yet has he in his heart the Order of the Golden Calf. He is one of

Mammon's boldest heroes. A very soldier of fortune. He is now fighting—fighting valorously. He has come armed with a bran-new lie—a falsehood of surpassing temper, which with wondrous quietude he lays about him, making huge gashes in the money-bags of those he fights with. A good foreign lie, well finished and well mounted, is to this Knight of the Golden Calf as the sword of Faery to Orlando. With it he sometimes cuts down giant fortunes, and after "grinds their bones to make his bread."

And there are small esquires and pages of the Order; men who, with heart-felt veneration, lick their lips at the Golden Calf, and with more than bridegroom yearning pant for possession. These small folk swarm like summer-gnats; and still they drone the praises of the Calf; and looking at no other thing, have their eyes bleared and dazzled to all beside.

The Knights of the Golden Calf shed no blood; that is, the wounds they deal bleed inwardly and give no evidence of homicide. They are, too, great consumers of the marrow of men; and yet they break no bones, but by a trick known to their Order extract without fracture precious nutriment. They are great alchemists, too; and turn the sweat of unrequited poverty, aye, the tears of childhood, into drops of gold.

Much wrong, much violence, much wayward cruelty—if the true history of knighthood were indicted—lies upon the Fleece, the Garter, yes, upon the Templar's Lamb;—yet all is but as May-day pastime to the voracity, the ignorance, the wilful selfishness, the bestial lowings of the Golden Calf. And of this Order the oldest of the brotherhood are the most gluttonous. There is one whose every fibre is blasted with age. To the imagination his face is as a coffin-plate. Yet is he all belly. As cruel as a cat though toothless as a bird!

Oh, ye knights, great and small—whether expanding on

the mart, or lying *perdu* in back parlours—fling from your hearts the Order there, and feel for once the warmth of kindly blood! The brotherhood chuckle at the adjuration. Well, let us fight the Order with an Order.

The Order of Poverty against the Order of the Golden Calf!

Will it not be a merry time, when men, with a blithe face and open look, shall confess that they are poor? When they shall be to the world what they are to themselves? When the lie, the shuffle, the bland, yet anxious hypocrisy of seeming, and seeming only, shall be a creed forsworn? When Poverty asserts itself, and never blushes and stammers at its true name, the Knights of the Calf must give ground. Much of their strength, their poor renown, their miserable glory, lies in the hypocrisy of those who would imitate them. They believe themselves great, because the poor, in the very ignorance of the dignity of poverty, would ape their magnificence.

The Order of Poverty! How many sub-orders might it embrace! As the spirit of Gothic chivalry has its fraternities, so might the Order of Poverty have its distinct devices.

The Order of the Thistle! That is an order for nobility—a glory to glorify marquisate or earldom. Can we not, under the rule of Poverty, find as happy a badge?

Look at this peasant. His face bronzed with midday toil. From sunrise to sunset, with cheerful looks and uncomplaining words, he turns the primal curse to dignity, and manfully earns his bread in the sweat of his brow. Look at the fields around! Golden with blessed corn. Look at this bloodless soldier of the plough—this hero of the sickle. His triumphs are there, piled up in bread-bestowing sheaves. Is he not Sir Knight of the Wheat-Ear? Surely, as truly dubbed in the heraldry of justice, as any Knight of the Thistle.

And here is a white-haired shepherd. As a boy, a child, playful as the lambs he tended, he laboured. He has dreamed away his life upon a hillside—on downs—on solitary heaths. The humble, simple, patient watcher for fellow-men. Solitude has been his companion: he has grown old, wrinkled, bent in the eye of the burning sun. His highest wisdom is a guess at the coming weather: he may have heard of diamonds, but he knows the evening star. He has never sat at a congress of kings: he has never helped to commit a felony upon a whole nation. Yet is he to our mind a most reverend Knight of the Fleece. If the Herald object to this, let us call him Knight of the Lamb! In its gentleness and patience, a fitting type of the poor old shepherd.

And here is a pauper, missioned from the workhouse to break stones at the road-side. How he strikes and strikes at that unyielding bit of flint! Is it not the stony heart of the world's injustice knocked at by poverty? What haggardness is in his face! What a blight hangs about him! There are more years in his looks than in his bones. Time has marked him with an iron pen. He wailed as a babe for bread his father was not allowed to earn. He can recollect every dinner—they were so few—of his childhood. He grew up, and want was with him even as his shadow. He has shivered with cold—fainted with hunger. His every day of life has been set about by goading wretchedness. Around him, too, were the stores of plenty. Food, raiment, and money mocked the man made half mad with destitution. Yet, with a valorous heart, a proud conquest of the shuddering spirit, he walked with honesty and starved. His long journey of life hath been through thorny places, and now he sits upon a pile of stones on the way-side, breaking them for workhouse bread. Could loftiest chivalry show greater heroism—nobler self-control, than this old man, this weary breaker of flints? Shall he not

be of the Order of Poverty? Is not penury to him even as a robe of honour? His grey workhouse coat braver than purple and miniver? He shall be Knight of the Granite if you will. A workhouse gem, indeed — a wretched, highway jewel—yet, to the eye of truth, finer than many a ducal diamond.

This man is a weaver; this a potter. Here, too, is a razor-grinder; here an iron-worker. Labour is their lot; labour they yearn for, though to some of them labour comes with miserable disease and early death. Have we not here Knights of the Shuttle, Knights of Clay, and Knights of Vulcan, who prepare the carcase of the giant engine for its vital flood of steam? Are not these among the noblest of the sons of Poverty? Shall they not take high rank in its Order?

We are at the mouth of a mine. There, many, many

fathoms below us, works the naked, grimed, and sweating wretch, oppressed, brutalised, that he may dig us coal for our winter's hearth; where we may gather round, and with filled bellies, well-clothed backs, and hearts all lapped in self-complacency, talk of the talked-of evils of the world, as though they were the fables of ill-natured men, and not the verities of bleeding life. That these men, doing the foulest offices of the world should still be of the world's poorest, gives dignity to want—the glory of long-suffering to poverty.

And so, indeed, in the mind of wisdom, is poverty ennobled. And for the Knights of the Golden Calf, how are they outnumbered! Let us, then, revive the Order of Poverty. Ponder, reader, on its antiquity. For was not Christ Himself Chancellor of the Order, and the Apostles Knights Companions?

THE OLD MAN AT THE GATE

In Surrey, some three miles from Chertsey, is a quiet, dull, sequestered nook, called Shepperton Green. Whether the new philanthropy of new pauper laws hath, of late years, sought out the spot I know not. At the time whereof I write, the olden charity dwelt in an old workhouse—a primitive abiding-place for the broken ploughman, the palsied shepherd, the old, old peasant, for whom nothing more remained in this world but to die. The governor of this abode of benevolence dwelt in the lower part of the building, and therein, as the village trade might fluctuate, made or mended shoes. Let the plain truth be said—the governor was a cobbler. Within a stone's cast of the workhouse was a little white gate swung between two hedge-banks in the road to Chertsey. Here, pass when you would, stood an old man, whose self-imposed office it was to open the gate; for the which service the passenger would drop some small benevolence in the withered hand of

the aged peasant. This man was a pauper—one of the almsmen of the village workhouse.

There was a custom—whether established by the governor aforesaid or by predecessors of a vanished century, I know not—that made it the privilege of the oldest pauper to stand the porter at the gate; his perquisite, by right of years, the halfpence of the rare pedestrian. As the senior died, the living senior succeeded to the office. Now the gate—and now the grave.

And this is all the history? All. The story is told—it will not bear another syllable. The "Old Man" is at the gate; the custom which places him there has been made known, and with it ends the narrative.

How few the incidents of life—how multitudinous its emotions! How flat, monotonous may be the circumstance of daily existence, and yet how various the thoughts which spring from it! Look at yonder landscape, broken into hill and dale, with trees of every hue and form, and water winding in silver threads through velvet fields. How beautiful—for how various! Cast your eye over that moor; it is flat and desolate—barren as barren rock. Not so. Seek the soil, and then, with nearer gaze, contemplate the wondrous forms and colours of the thousand mosses growing there; give ear to the hum of busy life sounding at every root of poorest grass. Listen! Does not the heart of the earth beat audibly beneath this seeming barrenness — audibly as where the corn grows and the grape ripens? Is it not so with the veriest rich and the veriest poor—with the most active and with apparently the most inert?

That "Old Man at the Gate" has eighty years upon his head—eighty years, covering it with natural reverence. He was once in London—only once. This pilgrimage excepted, he has never journeyed twenty miles from the cottage in which he was born; of which he became the

master; whereto he brought his wife; where his children saw the light, and their children after; where many of them died; and whence, having with a stout soul, fought against the strengthening ills of poverty and old age, he was thrust by want and sickness out, and, with a stung heart, he laid his bones upon a workhouse bed.

Life to the "Old Man" has been one long path across a moor—a flat, unbroken journey; the eye uncheered, the heart unsatisfied. Coldness and sterility have compassed him round. Yet, has he been subdued to the blankness of his destiny? Has his mind remained the unwrit page that schoolmen talk of—has his heart become a clod? Has he been made by poverty a moving image—a plough-guiding, corn-thrashing instrument? Have not unutterable thoughts sometimes stirred within his brain—thoughts that elevated, yet confused him with a sense of eternal beauty—coming upon him like the spiritual presences to the shepherds? Has he not been beset by the inward and mysterious yearning of the heart towards the unknown and the unseen? He has been a ploughman. In the eye of the well-to-do, dignified with the accomplishments of reading and writing, is he of little more intelligence than the oxen treading the glebe. Yet, who shall say that the influence of nature—that the glories of the rising sun—may not have called forth harmonies of soul from the rustic drudge, the moving statue of a man!

That worn-out, threadbare remnant of humanity at the gate; age makes it reverend, and the inevitable—shall inevitable be said?—injustice of the world invests it with majesty, the majesty of suffering meekly borne and meekly decaying. "The poor shall never cease out of the land." This text the self-complacency of competence loveth to quote: it hath a melody in it, a lulling sweetness to the selfishness of our nature. Hunger, and cold, and nakedness, are the hard portion of man; there is no help for it;

rags must flutter about us; man, yes, even the strong man, his only wealth (the wealth of Adam) wasting in his bones, must hold his pauper hand to his brother of four meals *per diem*; it is a necessity of nature, and there is no help for it. And thus some men send their consciences to sleep by the chinking of their own purses. Necessity of evil is an excellent philosophy applied to everybody but—ourselves.

These easy souls will see nothing in our "Old Man at the Gate" but a pauper, let out of the workhouse for the chance of a few halfpence. Surely, he is something more? He is old; very old. Every day, every hour, earth has less claim in him. He is so old, so feeble, that even as you look he seems sinking. At sunset he is scarcely the man who opened the gate to you in the morning. Yet there is no disease in him—none. He is dying of old age. He is working out that most awful problem of life—slowly, solemnly. He is now the badged pauper—and now in the unknown country with Solomon!

Can man look upon a more touching solemnity? There stands the old man, passive as a stone, nearer every moment to churchyard clay! It was only yesterday that he took his station at the gate. His predecessor held the post for two years; he too daily, daily dying:—

> "Till like a clock, worn out with eating time,
> The weary wheels of life at length stood still."

How long will the present watcher survive? In that very uncertainty—in the very hoariness of age which brings home to us that uncertainty—there is something that makes the old man sacred; for, in the course of nature, is not the oldest man the nearest to the angels?

Yet, away from these thoughts, there is reverence due to that old man. What has been his life? A war with suffering. What a beautiful world is this! How rich

and glorious! How abundant in blessings—great and little—to thousands! What a lovely place hath God made it; and how have God's creatures darkened and outraged it to the wrong of one another! Well, what had this man of the world? What stake, as the effrontery of selfishness has it? The wild fox was better cared for. Though preserved some day to be killed, it *was* preserved until then. What did this old man inherit? Toil, incessant toil, with no holiday of the heart: he came into the world a badged animal of labour; the property of animals. What was the earth to him?—a place to die in.

"The poor shall never cease out of the land." Shall we then, accommodating our sympathies to this hard necessity, look serenely down upon the wretched? Shall we preach only comfort to ourselves from the doomed condition of others? It is an easy philosophy; so easy there is but little wonder it is so well exercised.

But "The Old Man at the Gate" has, for seventy years, worked and worked; and what his closing reward? The workhouse. Shall we not, some of us, blush crimson at our own world-successes, considering the destitution of our worthy, single-hearted fellows? Should not affluence touch its hat to "The Old Man at the Gate" with a reverence for the years upon him; he—the born soldier of poverty, doomed for life to lead life's forlorn hope? Thus considered, surely Dives may unbonnet to Lazarus.

To our mind the venerableness of age made "The Old Man at the Gate" something like a spiritual presence. He was so old, who could say how few the pulsations of his heart between him and the grave! But there he was with a meek happiness upon him; gentle, cheerful. He was not built up in bricks and mortar; but was still in the open air, with the sweetest influences about him; the sky—the trees—the green sward—and flowers with the breath of God in them!

'The fifes and drums of her Majesty's Grenadiers.'

THE FOLLY OF THE SWORD

May we ask the reader to behold with us a melancholy show—a saddening, miserable spectacle? We will not take him to a prison, a workhouse, a Bedlam, where human nature expiates its guiltiness, its lack of worldly goods, its most desolate perplexity; but we will take him to a wretchedness, first contrived by wrong and perpetrated by folly. We will show him the embryo mischief that in due season shall be born in the completion of its terror, and shall be christened with a sounding name,—Folly and wickedness standing its sponsors.

We are in St James's Park. The royal standard of England burns in the summer air—the Queen is in London. We pass the Palace, and in a few paces are in Birdcage Walk. There, reader, is the miserable show we promised you. There are some fifty recruits, drilled by a sergeant to do homicide, killingly, handsomely. In Birdcage Walk Glory sits upon her eggs, and hatches eagles!

How very beautiful is the sky above us! What a blessing comes with the fresh, quick air! The trees, drawing their green beauty from the earth, quicken our thoughts of the

bounteousness of this teeming world. Here in this nook, this patch, where we yet feel the vibrations of surrounding London—even here Nature, constant in her beauty, blooms and smiles, uplifting the heart of man—if the heart be his to own her.

Now, look aside and contemplate God's image with a musket. Your bosom duly expanding with gratitude to nature for the blessings she has heaped about you, behold the crowning glory of God's work managed, like a machine, to slay the image of God—to stain the teeming earth with homicidal blood—to fill the air with howling anguish! Is not yonder row of clowns a melancholy sight? Yet are they the sucklings of Glory—the baby mighty ones of a future *Gazette*. Reason beholds them with a deep pity. Imagination magnifies them into fiends of wickedness. There is carnage about them—carnage, and the pestilential vapour of the slaughtered. What a fine-looking thing is war! Yet dress it as we may, dress and feather it, daub it with gold, huzza it and sing swaggering songs about it—what is it, nine times out of ten—but murder in uniform? Cain, taken the sergeant's shilling?

And now we hear the fifes and drums of her Majesty's Grenadiers. They pass on the other side; and a crowd of idlers, their hearts jumping to the music, their eyes dazzled, and their feelings perverted, hang about the march and catch the infection—the love of glory! And true wisdom thinks of the world's age, and sighs at its slow advance in all that really dignifies man—the truest dignity being the truest love for his fellow. And then hope, and faith in human progress, contemplate the pageant, its real ghastliness disguised by outward glare and frippery, and know the day will come when the symbols of war will be as the sacred beasts of old Egypt—things to mark the barbarism of bygone war; melancholy records of the past perversity of human nature.

We can imagine the deep-chested laughter—the look of

scorn which would annihilate, and then the smile of compassion—of the man of war at this, the dream of folly and the wanderings of an inflamed brain. Yet, oh, man of war! at this very moment are you shrinking, withering like an aged giant. The fingers of Opinion have been busy at your plume—you are not the feathered thing you were; and then that little tube, the goose quill, has sent its silent shot into your huge anatomy; and the corroding INK, even whilst you look at it, and think it shines so brightly, is eating with a tooth of rust into your sword.

That a man should kill a man and rejoice in the deed—nay, gather glory from it—is the act of a wild animal. The force of muscle and the dexterity of limb which make the wild man a conqueror are deemed, in savage life, man's highest attributes. The creature whom, in the pride of our Christianity, we call heathen and spiritually desolate, has some personal feeling in the strife—he kills his enemy, and then, making an oven of hot stones, bakes his dead body, and, for crowning satisfaction, eats it. His enemy becomes a part of him; his glory is turned to nutriment; and he is content. What barbarism! Field-marshals sicken at the horror; nay, troopers shudder at the tale, like a fine lady at a toad.

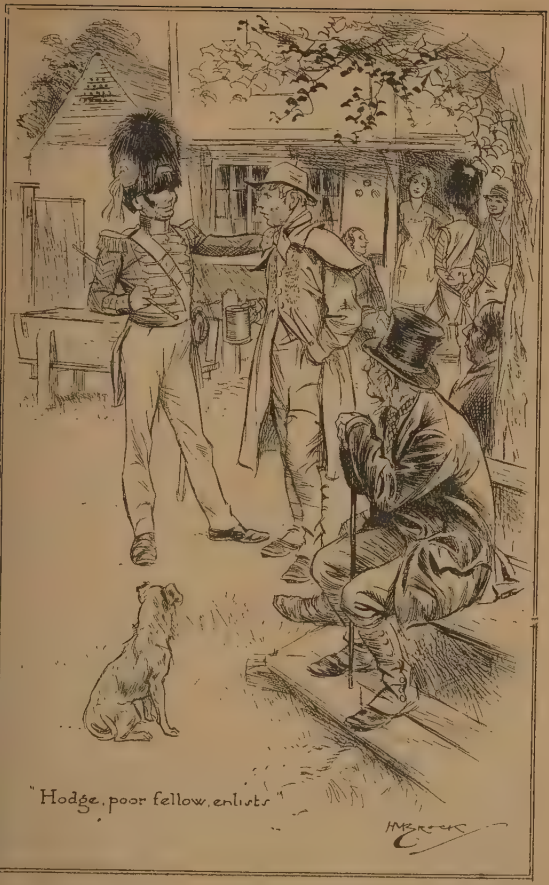
In what, then, consists the prime evil? In the murder, or in the meal? Which is the most hideous deed—to kill a man, or to cook and eat the man when killed?

But, softly, there is no murder in the case. The craft of man has made a splendid ceremony of homicide—has invested it with dignity. He slaughters with flags flying, drums beating, trumpets braying. He kills according to method, and has worldly honours for his grim handiwork. He does not, like the unchristian savage, carry away with him mortal trophies from the skulls of his enemies. No, the alchemy and magic of authority turns his well-won scalps into epaulets, or hangs them in stars and crosses at

his button-hole; and then, the battle over, the dead not eaten, but carefully buried—and the maimed and mangled howling and blaspheming in hospitals—the meek Christian warrior marches to church, and reverently folding his sweet and spotless hands, sings *Te Deum*. Angels wave his fervent thanks to God, to whose footstool—in his own faith—he has so lately sent his shuddering thousands. And this spirit of destruction working within him is canonised by the craft and ignorance of man and worshipped as glory!

And this religion of the sword—this dazzling heathenism, that makes a pomp of wickedness—seizes and distracts us even on the threshold of life. Swords and drums are our baby playthings; the types of violence and destruction are made the pretty pastimes of our childhood; and as we grow older, the outward magnificence of the ogre Glory—his trappings and his trumpets, his privileges, and the songs that are shouted in his praise—ensnare the bigger baby to his sacrifice. Hence slaughter becomes an exalted profession; the marked, distinguished employment of what in the jargon of the world is called a gentleman.

But for this craft operating upon this ignorance, who—in the name of outraged God—would become the hireling of the Sword? Hodge, poor fellow, enlists. He wants work; or he is idle, dissolute. Kept, by the injustice of the world, as ignorant as the farmyard swine, he is the better instrument for the world's craft. His ear is tickled with the fife and drum; or he is drunk; or the sergeant—the lying valet of glory—tells a good tale, and already Hodge is a warrior in the rough. In a fornight's time you may see him at Chatham; or indeed he was one of those we marked in Birdcage Walk. Day by day the sergeant works at the block ploughman, and, chipping and chipping, at length carves out a true, handsome soldier of the line. What knew Hodge of the responsibility of man? What dreams had he of the self-accountability of the human spirit? He



"Hodge, poor fellow, enlists"

is become the lackey of carnage, the liveried footman, at a few pence per day, of fire and blood. The musket stock, which for many an hour he hugs—hugs in sulks and weariness—was no more a party to its present use than was Hodge. That piece of walnut is the fragment of a tree that might have given shade and fruit for another century; homely, rustic people gathering under it. Now it is the instrument of wrong and violence; the working tool of slaughter. Tree and man, are not their destinies as one?

And is Hodge alone of benighted mind? Is he alone deficient of that knowledge of moral right and wrong, which really and truly crowns the man king of himself? When he surrenders up his nature, a mere machine with human pulses to do the bidding of war, has he taken counsel with his own reflection—does he know the limit of the sacrifice? He has taken his shilling, and knows the facings of his uniform!

When the born and bred gentleman, to keep to coined and current terms, pays down his thousand pounds or so for his commission, what incites to the purchase? It may be the elegant idleness of the calling: it may be the bullion and glitter of the regimentals; or, devout worshipper, it may be an unquenchable thirst for glory. From the moment when his name stars the *Gazette*, what does he become? The bond-servant of war! Instantly he ceases to be a judge between moral right and moral injury. It is his duty not to think, but to obey. He has given up, surrendered to another the freedom of his soul: he has dethroned the majesty of his own will. He must be active in wrong, and see not the injustice: shed blood for craft and usurpation, calling bloodshed valour. He may be made, by the iniquity of those who use him, a burglar and a brigand; but glory calls him pretty names for his prowess, and the wicked weakness of the world shouts and acknowledges him. And is this the true condition of reasonable

man? Is it by such means that he best vindicates the greatness of his mission here? Is he when he most gives up the free motions of his own soul—is he then most glorious?

A few months ago chance showed us a band of ruffians who, as it afterwards appeared, were intent upon most desperate mischief. They spread themselves over the country, attacking, robbing, and murdering all who fell into their hands. Men, women, and children all suffered alike. Nor were the villains satisfied with this. In their wanton ruthlessness they set fire to cottages, and tore up and destroyed plantations. Every footpace of their march was marked with blood and desolation.

Who were these wretches? you ask. What place did they ravage? Were they not caught and punished?

They were a part of the army of Africa; valorous Frenchmen, bound for Algiers to cut Arab throats; and, in the name of glory, and for the everlasting glory of France, to burn, pillage, and despoil; and all for national honour—all for glory!

But Glory cannot dazzle Truth. Does it not at times appear no otherwise than a highwayman with a pistol at a nation's breast? a burglar with a crowbar entering a kingdom? Alas! in this world there is no Old Bailey for nations, otherwise where would have been the crowned heads that divided Poland? Those felon monarchs anointed to—steal? It is true the historian claps the cutpurse conqueror in the dock, and he is tried by the jury of posterity. *He* is past the verdict, yet is not its damnatory voice lost upon generations? For thus is the world taught—albeit slowly taught—true glory; when that which passed for virtue is truly tested to be vile; when the hero is hauled from the car and fixed for ever in the pillory.

But war brings forth the heroism of the soul: war tests the magnanimity of man. Sweet is the humanity that

spares a fallen foe; gracious the compassion that tends his wounds, that brings even a cup of water to his burning lips. Granted. But is there not a heroism of a grander mould—the heroism of forbearance? Is not the humanity that refuses to strike a nobler virtue than the late pity born of violence? Pretty is it to see the victor with salve and lint kneeling at his bloody trophy—a maimed and agonised fellowman; but surely it had been better to withhold the blow than to have been first mischievous, to be afterwards humane.

That nations professing a belief in Christ should couple glory with war is monstrous blasphemy. Their faith, their professing faith, is—"Love one another"; their practice is to—cut throats; and more, to bribe and hoodwink men to the wickedness, the trade of blood is magnified into a virtue. We pray against battle, and glorify the deeds of death. We say beautiful are the ways of peace, and then cocker ourselves upon our perfect doings in the art of man-slaying. Let us then cease to pay the sacrifice of admiration to the demon—War; let us not acknowledge him as a mighty and majestic principle, but, at the very best, a grim and melancholy necessity.

But there always has been—there always will be—war. It is inevitable; it is a part of the condition of human society. Man has always made glory to himself from the destruction of his fellow; so it will continue. It may be very pitiable; would it were otherwise! But so it is, and there is no helping it.

Happily we are slowly killing this destructive fallacy. A long breathing time of peace has been fatal to the dread magnificence of glory. Science and philosophy—*povera e nuda filosofia!*—have made good their claims, inducing man to believe that he may vindicate the divinity of his nature otherwise than by perpetrating destruction. He begins to think there is a better glory in the communication

of triumphs of the mind, than in the clash of steel and the roar of artillery. At the present moment a society, embracing men of distant nations—"natural enemies," as the old wicked cant of the old patriotism had it—is at work plucking the plumes from Glory, unbracing his armour, and divesting the ogre of all that dazzled foolish and unthinking men, showing the rascal in his natural hideousness, in all his base deformity. Some, too, are calculating the cost of Glory's table: some showing what an appetite the demon has, devouring at a meal the substance of these thousand sons of industry—yea, eating up the wealth of kingdoms. And thus by degrees are men beginning to look upon this god Glory as no more than a finely-trapped Sawney Bean—a monster and a destroyer—a nuisance—a noisy lie.

THE GREENWICH PENSIONER

A Greenwich pensioner! Did any of my readers ever ponder on that strange composition of battered humanity and blue serge? Did they never feel a something approaching very near gratitude on passing, in the metropolis, a Greenwich pensioner, who, with his honest, carved out, unabashed front, looks as bluntly and as wonderingly at the bustle and splendour around him as does an unsophisticated wether suddenly removed from South Downs to Cheapside, whilst shaking his woollen coat beneath the whip of the coachman to the Lord Mayor. What a mixture of gravity and wonderment is in the poor brute's countenance! how with its meek, uplifted head it stares at the effulgent vehicle,—runs leaping at the coach-wheels, mistaking them for hurdles,—falls, awe-struck, back, at the gilt and beavered greatness of the footman's cocked hat,—then, suddenly awakened from its amazement by the lurcher's teeth, or the driver's stick, makes an unlucky spring of some three

feet into the air, catches a glance of its figure in the mirrored walls of a silk mercer, and, startled at the sight, dashes through the first court,—carrying perhaps a few yards upon its back some red-faced, nankeen-gaitered little stockbroker, whose spattered small clothes are for a time unregarded in the mighty rush of drovers, butchers, dogs, and idlers.

Now such is the real Greenwich pensioner. When I say *real*, I mean one who abhors London worse than he does a Frenchman; who thinks there is nothing to be seen in it, unless, indeed, it be Nelson's tomb, in St Paul's, or the "Ship" public-house, in Tooley Street. London is to him a never-failing source of merriment; that is, whilst he is out of it. He sits at Greenwich, and looking as sagely as a starling ere he snaps at a fly, at the piled-up clouds of smoke hanging over the metropolis, or, indeed, almost propped upon its chimney-pots, and, stretching forth his stick, significantly points them out to his former shipmates, asking them if they do not think "there is something dark over there—something of an 'ox-eye' to the west?" He, indeed, never ventures to London, unless it be for a fresh supply of tobacco, or to pay a quarterly visit to his granddaughter, the upper housemaid in a gentleman's family,—and who, indeed, thinks with horror upon his call, because the neighbours laugh at the cocked hat and the shoe-buckles of her relative; but principally because Richard, the baker's young man, declares he hates all sailors. The visit is never a very lengthened one, especially if the girl lives far to the west; for her grandfather has to call upon Will Somebody, who set up, with his prize-money, a public-house in Wapping. So off he starts, hurries up the Strand, touches his hat from a point of principle as he nears Somerset House; puts out more canvas, and away for Temple Bar. The pensioner has not yet, however, sat for his picture.

We have all read of crabs being despoiled of their claws, locusts of their entrails, and turtles of their brains, receiving in lieu thereof a pellet of cotton, and yet retaining life, and appearing, in the words of the experimentalising and soft-hearted naturalist, "very lively and comfortable."[1] Now, the real Greenwich pensioner distances all these; he is, indeed, an engima: nature knows not what to make of him. He hath been suspended, like a school-boy's bob-cherry, a hundred times over the chaps of death, and yet still been snatched away by the hand of Providence—to whom, indeed, his many hurts and dangers have especially endeared him. Ye of the "*land* interest," ye soft-faced young sparks, who think with terror upon a razor on a frosty morning,—ye suffering old gentlemen, who pause at a linen-draper's, and pass the flannel between your fingers, as time verges towards October—ye martyrs to a winter cough, ye racked with a quarterly toothache—all ye of household ailings, look upon this hacked, shivered piece of clay, this Greenwich pensioner:—consider of how many of his powers he is despoiled—see where the cutlass and the boarding-spike have ploughed up and pierced his flesh; see where the bullet has glanced, singeing by; and when you have reckoned up—if they are to be reckoned—his many scars, above all, look at his hard, contented, weather-barnacled face, and then, gentle spectators, complain of your rheums, your joint-twitchings, and your corns!

Why, this Greenwich pensioner is in himself a record of the last forty years' war. He is a breathing volume of naval history: not an event but is somewhere indented in him with steel or lead: he has been the stick in which the English Mars has notched his cricket matches, when twenty-four pounders were balls, and mainmasts wickets. See, in his blinded eye is Howe's victory on the glorious First of June; that stump of what was once an arm is Nile;

[1] See *Vaillant* and *Redi*.

and in his wooden leg read Trafalgar. As to his scars, a gallant action, or a desperate cutting out is noted in every one of them. And what was the old fellow's only wish, as with a shattered knee he lay in the cock-pit under the surgeon's hand—what was his earnest supplication to the wet-eyed messmate who bore him down the hatchway? Simply that he would save him one of the splinters of the mainmast of the *Victory*, to make of it a leg for Sundays! His wish was granted; and at Greenwich, always on the seventh day, and also on the 21st of October, is he to be seen, propped upon the inestimable splinter, which from labour, time, and beeswax, has taken the dark glossiness of mahogany. What a face he has! What a certain consciousness of his superiority on his own element at times puffs out his lip, and gives a sudden twitch to his head! But ask him in what quarter sets the wind—and note, how with his one eye he will glance at you from top to toe; and, without ever raising his head or hand to make a self-inquiry, answers you at once, as though it was a question he was already prepared for! And so, indeed, he is; it being his first business, on rising, to consult the weather. The only way to gain his entire confidence, is at once frankly to avow your utter ignorance, and his superiority; and then, after he has leered at you with an eye in which there is a meeting of contempt, good-humour, and self-importance, he is wholly your own; and will straightway launch into the South Seas, coast along the shores of Guinea,—where, by-the-bye, he will tell you he once fell in love with a negress, who, however, jilted him for the cook—and then he will launch out about Admiral Duncan—take you a voyage with him round Cape Horn, where a mermaid appeared, and sang a song to the ship's crew; and who, indeed, blew aside all the musket shots that were ungallantly fired at her in requital of her melody. But our pensioner has one particular story; hear him through that, suffer yourself to be wholly astounded at

its recital, and, if you were not a landsman, he would instantly greet you as his dearest friend. The heroes of this same story are, our pensioner and a shark: a tremendous shark that used to be the terror of the harbour of St Thomas's. Upon this shark, and the piece of the main-mast of the *Victory*, is our pensioner content to rest all his importance during his life, and his fame with posterity. He will tell you that he, being caterer of the mess, let fall a piece of beef out at the port-hole, which this terrible shark received into its jaws, and twisted its body most provokingly at the delicious mouthful. Hereupon our pensioner —it was before, he reminds you, he had lost a limb—asks leave of the first lieutenant (for the captain was ashore) to have a bout with the shark: leave being granted, all the crew are quickly in the shrouds, and upon the hammock netting, to see Tom "tackle the shark." Our pensioner now enters into a minute detail of how, having armed himself with a long knife, he jumped overboard, dived under the shark, whom he saw approaching with distended jaws, and inflicted a tremendous wound with the knife in the belly of the fish; this is repeated thrice, when the shark turns itself upon its back—a boat is let down, and both the conqueror and the conquered are quickly received upon deck. You are doubtless astonished at this; he, however, adds to your surprise by telling you that the mess regaled off the piece of beef recovered from the fish; be more astounded at this, although mingle no doubt in your astonishment, and he will straightway promise some day to treat your eyes with a sight of a set of chequer men, cut from the very dorsal bone of the immolated shark! To be the hearer of a sailor's tale is something like undergoing the ancient ordeal of red-hot ploughshares; be innocent of unbelief, and you may, as was held, journey in safety; doubt the smallest point, and you are quickly withered into nought.

What an odd contrast to his early life is the state of a

Greenwich pensioner! It is as though a part of the angry and foaming sea should lie stagnant in a bathing tub. All his business is to recount his former adventures—to plod about, and look with a disdainful eye at trees and bricks and mortar; or, when he would indulge in a serious fit of spleen, to walk down to the river's side, and let his gall feed upon the mishaps of London apprentices, who, fearless of consequences, may have ventured some five miles from home in *not* a "trim-built wherry." A Greenwich pensioner fresh from sea is a most preposterous creature; he gets up every morning for a week, a month, and still finds himself in the same place; he knows not what to make of it—he feels the strangeness of his situation, and would, had he the patience and the wit, liken himself to a hundred unsettled things. Compare him to a hippopotamus in a gentleman's park, and he would tell you he had in his day seen a hippopotamus, and then, with a good-natured grunt, acquiesce in the resemblance; or to a jolly-boat in a flower garden; or to a sea-gull in the cage of a canary; or to a porpoise upon a hearthrug; or to a boatswain's whistle in a nursery; or to a marling-spike in a milliner's workroom; or a tar-barrel in a confectioner's; with any one or all of these misplaced articles would our unsettled pensioner sympathise, until time shall have reconciled him to his asylum; and even then his fancy, like the shells upon our mantelpiece, will sound of the distant and the dangerous ocean. At Greenwich, however, the mutilated old sailor has time enough to indulge in the recollection of his early days, and, with what wisdom he may, to make up his mind to meet in another world those whom his arm may have sent thither long before. Death, at length, gently lays the veteran upon his back—his last words, as the sailor puts his withered hand upon his heart, are "All's well," and sea and earth have passed away. His body, which had been for forty years a bulwark to the land, now demands of it but "two

paces of the vilest earth"; and if aught could spring from the tomb characteristic of its inmate, from the grave of the pensioner would arise the stout, unbending oak—it would be his fitting monument; and the carolling of the birds in its branches would be his loud, his artless epitaph.

The Greenwich pensioner, wherever we meet with him, is a fine, quaint memento of our national greatness, and our fortunate locality. We should look upon him as the representative of Neptune, and bend our spirit towards him accordingly. But that is not sufficient; we have individual acknowledgments to make to him for the comforts of a long safety. Let us but consider, as we look at his wooden supporter, that if it had not been for his leg the cannon-ball might have scattered us in our tea parlour—the bullet which deprived him of his orb of vision might have stricken *Our Village* from our hand whilst ensconced in our study; the cutlass which cleaved his shoulder might have demolished our china vase, or our globe of golden fish:—instead of which, hemmed round by such walls of stout and honest flesh, we have lived securely, participating in every peaceful and domestic comfort, and neither heard the roar of the cannon nor seen its smoke. Shakespeare has compared England to "a swan's nest" in the "world's pool": let us be nautical in our similes, and liken her to a single lemon kernel in a huge bowl of punch: who is it that has prevented the kernel from being ladled down the throat of despotism, from becoming but an atom of the great, loathsome mass?—our Greenwich pensioner. Who has kept our houses from being transformed into barracks and our cabbage markets into parades?—again, and again, let it be answered, the Greenwich pensioner. Reader, if the next time you see the tar, you should perchance have with you your wife and smiling family, think that if their tenderness has never been shocked by scenes of blood and terror, you owe such quietude to a Greenwich pensioner. Indeed, I know not

if a triennial progress of the Greenwich establishment through the whole kingdom would not be attended with the most beneficial effects—fathers would teach their little ones to lisp thanksgivings unto God that they were born in England, as reminded of their happy superiority by the withered form of every Greenwich pensioner.

THE DRILL SERGEANT

Shall we view our subject through the glasses of philosophy? Precious microscopic glasses, by which we look into the exquisite order of a bee's weapon, which shames the ruggedness of that vaunted wonder of man's hands—a Whitechapel needle. By which the superfine coat of the unworthy appears but as a vile complication of coarse hempstrings; by which we look into the heart that to the naked eye displays a tenanted cherub, with voice of music and wings of light, but find a weak-eyed little monster, with squeak of mouse and pinions of leather. O, glorious spectacles! which show palaces not entirely as resting-places for divinities—many laurels as nettles, stinging what they are fancied to adorn—Fame's trumpet, a penny whistle blown by Asthma—the awful person of Ceremony, a Merry-Andrew stricken grave—a grand review-day, a game at ninepins on an extensive scale—a levee, a triumph of the laceman and jeweller—a court ode, a verbose receipt for wages—"honourable gentleman," convicted scoundrel—"learned friend," stupid opponent—a prison, a temporary

retirement from noise—a glass of spring water, a "cup of sack"—an ugly face, God's own handiwork—a handsome one, nothing more—noble blood, of the same hue as a carter's—a black parish coffin, a couch of crystal—a grave, a place of rest—consecrated earth, the whole globe—a tombstone, work for the mason—a pompous epitaph, the toil of a liar! This transformation—or rather, this showing of reality—is the result of using the glasses of philosophy. Without the common microscope we could not know how certain insects respired, whether at the mouth or shoulders; wanting philosophy's optic, we should be in like ignorance of the source of being in some men—for all exist not by the same laws. To the naked eye, indeed, there appears no difference; but to the spectacled orb of philosophy it is shown that many men respire, not by inward organisation, but by external and adventitious instruments. Let those who are sceptical on this position consider for a moment the bearing of a thorough-paced coxcomb: does he breathe from his lungs? No; but from his habiliments. His coat, cravat, boots—yea, his spurs, are the sources of his being, his dignity, his action. Nay, some men take all their life from a riband at their button-hole, or a garter at their leg. —Our Drill Sergeant takes it from his rattan.

I know that much of this may be deemed foreign to the purpose. To those who so conclude, I say—A common wire-dancer gives not his grand feat without many little nick-nack preparations. When we visit the Egyptian Hall, that grand emporium of monsters, we do not step from the pavement into the show-room, but are wisely made to thread two or three passages for the better excitation of our feelings. And shall my Drill Sergeant have not the common observance paid to a mermaid? I trust I have more respect for my subject, and the army in general. If any one of my readers, when he glanced at the title, thought to meet with the Sergeant standing bolt upright at

the beginning of the line, like the sentinel at Buckingham Gate, I luxuriate in his disappointment.

To be candid: I had laid down no form for my beginning; so I thought a caper or two upon philosophy would not be amiss, trusting eventually to drop upon my subject. This is a trick frequently played by ——. However, to business.

We must contemplate the Drill Sergeant at a distance: there is no closing with him. A painter would decline a chair in the tiger's den, asserting that he could take the animal's stripes equally well through the bars. Even so will I take the stripes of our Sergeant. First, to consider his appearance, or rather the discipline by which his "thews and muscles" deport themselves. He has a vile, cat-like leer of the eye, that makes us retreat back a few paces, and rub our palms, to be assured the knave has not secretly placed in one of them a shilling. We tremble, and for once are afraid to meet the king's countenance—(I am adding to the awful attributes of the Drill Sergeant the fearful privilege of recruiting). We shrink, lest he has mentally approved of us as being worthy of ball cartridge. He glances towards our leg, and we cannot but feel that he is thinking how it would look in a black gaiter. At this moment we take courage, and, valiantly lifting off our hat, pass our luxuriant curls through our four fingers—we are petrified; for we see by his chuckle that he has already doomed our tresses to the scissors of the barrack-barber. We are at once about to take to our legs, when, turning round, we see something under a middle-sized man, looking over our head. On this we feel our safety, and triumph in the glory of five feet one. Something must always be allowed for weakness—something for vanity; which, indeed, philosophers denominate the greatest weakness. Hence all these cogitations, foolishly attributed by the little individual to the Sergeant, arise from the civil man's

self-conceit; the Sergeant always treating with ineffable contempt persons of a certain size. And here may be remarked the astonishing capacity of our Sergeant in judging of human altitude. Ere George Bidder can enumerate the virtues of King Ferdinand, our Sergeant will sum up the exact height of a man, duly allowing for his pumps and silk stockings. Strive to mystify the question, and the ability of the Sergeant mocks the endeavour; for, he will, on a minute's notice, resolve how many feet of martial flesh are in a complete square, after including the triangle, fife, and drummer lads, and deducting some of the boy officers. Thus, five-feet-eight reader, if thou wouldst enjoy the pranks of the Sergeant, unmolested by his eye, teach thy leg to mimic lameness: or, if easier, cough consumptively.

I would wish to convey a striking resemblance of our Drill Sergeant on duty, when you would swear by his gait that this glorious earth was wholly composed of spring wires, so elastic are his soles. It is a motion unparalleled either in the natural or artificial world; it is a movement by itself—like the swoop of the eagle, the waddle of the duck, the fleetness of the greyhound, or the hop of the frog. And yet, on intense consideration, I think I have seen something approximating to the bearing of our Drill Sergeant. What think you of the manner of a pug dog in a dropsy, exposed for air on a nipping December morning, his black nose turning almost white with indignation at the coldness of the flags?—There certainly is a resemblance; there is dignity in both animals, albeit to the daring eye of a grotesque character. It must, however, be owned, that on great occasions our Sergeant can alter his deportment. It is not in the nature of things to be always strained to the highest: the distended skin of the serpent at times falls into amiable and social wrinkles; an arrant shrew may sometimes be caught singing "*Sweet Home!*" the bow-string of a William Tell may be doubtless as relaxed

and tuneless as the instrument of a Haymarket fiddler;—and shall not our Sergeant unbend? He does break himself up from the stiffness of parade; for see him when the draughts of mine hostess hath diluted some portion of military starch, and he no longer holds his head like a game-cock, taking his morning's potation; see him then, and own that even a Sergeant may be amiable. Is he not the very model of elegant ease? He is, indeed, unbent; for his limbs swing loosely as hung ramrods. Our Sergeant can now talk; his tongue hath overleapt the two barriers, "Attention!" and "Stand at ease!" and rambles wildly from Egypt to Waterloo. And if it should happen that the pretty barmaid be niece to the landlady, mark how the Sergeant probes for her feelings with charged bayonets—how he will try to smite her gentle ear with a discharge of artillery—swear that he hath had twenty wounds under his coat, although very politically adding that they have left him not a bit the worse man. Then, if the damsel still continue untouched, taking orders with a calm air, our Sergeant hints in a whisper, audible to the dozing watchman at the door, something about a Spanish widow at Saragossa; adding very loudly, "But no—I was always for true love!" adorning the beautiful edifice of principle with a flowery oath. He then begins a sentiment, and, at a loss, dives for the conclusion to it in a pot of ale. If there happen to be four or five privates in the room, our Sergeant increases in importance from the circumstance—just as a cat becomes great from the introduction of a litter of puppies. Our Sergeant is more than ever the leading gander of the flock—the king-herring of the shoal—the blue-bottle of the swarm—the pebble of the sand—the G of the gamut. He has now additional hearers of the tales of his prowess, and, if he but give the wink, companions who saw him face the breach and spike the cannon. His rank next becomes the subject of discussion; and looking

very complacently at his arm, he tells of some dreadful exploit in which he earned his stripes. "And doubtless, Sergeant, not before you deserved them," ventures a small, quiet wight in the corner, who will have his fling, though at the expense of his liquor; for ere he concludes his remark he gives the Sergeant his glass—just as a schoolboy, who twitches the trunk of an elephant, throws to the animal a peace-offering of apples—whilst the privates inwardly laugh at the joke, and get rebuked for again enjoying it on parade to-morrow morning. Just as the Sergeant's opponents are nearly all slaughtered, a little Italian boy, bearing a tortoise, adroitly glides into the room to display the testaceous wonder; or he has with him a bust of Napoleon, at which our Sergeant bristles up, looking, indeed, seriously fierce at plaster of Paris. Here he utters some half-audible wish that he had not received a bullet in the last charge, and then— Now, however, our Sergeant takes an opportunity to pour forth his learning—he mangles five words of French; the Italian shakes his head, and holds forth his hand; the Sergeant swears at him for an impostor, ignorant of his own language. It drawing late, our Sergeant calls for his reckoning, and, learning the amount, with an affected air of destitution avows he has no money; he has not a piece of silver about him, unless it be that at his breast—and here he carelessly lifts up with one finger a Waterloo medal;—then he draws out a watch, once the property of a French general slain by our Sergeant, and asks if that will serve for the amount? At length, however, the money being shaken from a yellow silk purse, our Sergeant, after a salutary admonition to the privates, goes off, as he says, to visit a friend in the Ordnance.

Now this is the utmost stretch of our Sergeant's amiability; and he departs with a consciousness of having made himself remarkably agreeable, at the same time that he has maintained the proper dignity of the army. To-morrow he

"He was, indeed, unbent."

is stiff and stately again, performing his old duty of setting up in due order men for the sport of War, that fearful skittle-player. And, indeed, how great must be the satisfaction of the Drill Sergeant when he thinks that, by his kindly solicitude, his Majesty's subjects will "die with decency" and "in close order." Soothing reflection!

We may liken a Recruiting Sergeant to a sturdy woodman —a Drill Sergeant to a carpenter. Let us take a dozen vigorous young elms, with the same number of bluff-cheeked, straddling rustics. How picturesque and inviting do the green waving elms appear! Whilst we look at them our love and admiration of the natural so wholly possess us that we cannot for a moment bring ourselves to imagine the most beautiful offspring of teeming earth cut up into boot-jacks or broom-handles: in the very idea there is sacrilege to the sylvan deities. The woodman, however, lays the axe to the elms (the forest groans at the slaughter); the carpenter comes up with his basket of tools across his shoulder; and at a Christmas dinner we may by chance admire the extraordinary polish of our eating knife, little thinking it owes its lustre to the elm which shadowed us at midsummer. Now for our rustics. We meet them in green lanes, striding like young ogres—carelessness in their very hat-buckles—a scorn of ceremony in the significant tuck-up of their smock-frock. The Recruiting Sergeant spirits them away from fields to which they were the chief adornment, and the Drill Sergeant begins his labour.

And now, reader, behold some martial carpentry and joinery. Our Drill Sergeant hath but few implements: as eye, voice, hand, leg, rattan. These few tools serve him for every purpose, and with them he brings down a human carcass, though at first as unwieldy as a bull, to the slimness and elegance of the roe. There are the dozen misshapen logs before him; the foliage of their heads gone with the

elm leaves, as also their bark—their "rough pash,"—the frocks and wide breeches.

Mercy on us! there was a stroke of handiwork! the Sergeant with but one word has driven a wedge into the very breast of that pale-looking youngster, whose eyelid shakes as though it would dam up a tear! Perhaps the poor wretch is now thinking of yellow corn and harvest home. Another skilful touch, and the Sergeant hath fairly chiselled away some inches of the shoulder of that flaxen-headed tyro: and see how he is rounding off that mottled set of knuckles, whilst the owner redly, but dumbly, sympathises with their sufferings. There is no part left untouched by our Sergeant; he by turns, saws, planes, pierces, and thumps every limb and every joint; applies scouring paper to any little knot or ruggedness, until man, glorious man, the "paragon of animals," fears no competition in stateliness of march, or glibness of movement, from either peacock or Punch.

The Drill Sergeant hath but little complacency in him; he is a thing to be reverenced, not doated upon; we fear him and his mysteries; even his good humour startles, for it is at once as blustering and as insignificant as a report of a blank cartridge. Again, I say, the Drill Sergeant is to be approached with awe; smirking flies the majesty of his rattan. He is the despot of joints; and we rub our hands with glee, and our very toes glow again, when we reflect they are not of his dominions.

CHAPTER I

By the late Captain Barabbas Whitefeather. Late of the body-guard of his Majesty, King Carlos; Treasurer of the British Wine and Vinegar Company; Trustee for the protection of the River Thames from incendiaries; principal inventor of Poyais stock; Ranger of St George's Fields; original Patentee of the Parachute Conveyance Association; Knight of every order of the fleece; Scamp and Cur.

"A man he was to all the country *dear*."—GOLDSMITH.

Edited by John Jackdaw.

THE editor has disciplined himself to receive with becoming moderation the tremendous expression of national gratitude consequent on the publication of this valuable work—the production of the late estimable Captain Barabbas White-

feather. It was discovered among many other papers accidentally left at the lodgings of the deceased, and placed in the hands of the editor by the executors of the lamented and—if a novel epithet may be applied to him—talented author.

When "handbooks" devoted to the lighter elegancies, nay, to the frivolities, of life are every day poured down upon a thankful generation, it would indeed be to incur the charge of poltroonery to doubt the brilliant success of the present essay.

The philosophical observer who has witnessed the fervent welcome accorded by a British public to "The Handbook of Skittles," "The Handbook of Cheese-Toasting," "The Handbook of Eel-Skinning," "The Handbook of Nutmeg-Grating," The Handbook of Corn-Cutting," "The Handbook of Kitten-Drowning," and other productions of lesser pith and purpose,—the philosophic observer cannot but glow with the sweetest and liveliest feelings of anticipated pleasure at the outburst of national gratitude acknowledging and rejoicing in the publication of

"THE HANDBOOK OF SWINDLING."

Let us for a moment consider the comprehensiveness of the subject. Other handbooks have their merits and their uses: far be it from the editor to detract one iota from their claims upon a thoughtful people; yet it must be conceded that their different subjects apply rather to the wants of sections of the public than to the public in its integrity. For instance, how few rejoice in the masculine exercise of skittles! Toasted cheese, albeit the favourite diet of many of Cyclopean digestion, is sedulously shunned by dyspeptic hundreds of thousands. The class of the eel-skinning public is indeed most limited; nutmeg is never dreamt of by at least a million of our fellow-subjects; a million more, it is our cheerful hope, know not the visitation of corns;

whilst, could a census be taken of the number of kittens annually sacrificed by drowning, it would possibly be discovered that not one British subject out of five hundred is ever called upon to perform that painful, yet necessary and most domestic operation. It must then be acknowledged that all handbooks hitherto published are more or less limited in their application; but for "The Handbook of Swindling,"—why, it is a national work; a *vade mecum* for a whole people!

It was the intention of the editor to dedicate this work to some illustrious individual worthy of the distinction. But so many candidates—all equally deserving of the honour—with claims so nicely balanced, rose before him, that the editor, considering it would be invidious to many to select one alone, dedicates the book to the nation at large. Yes, he gives it to his country; but too well repaid if he shall be the means of calling from the working day road of life one simple traveller to the pleasant "primrose path" made easier and laid more open to him by this golden volume.

Breakneck Steps,
Old Bailey.

CHAPTER I

THE READER IS INTRODUCED TO CAPTAIN WHITEFEATHER'S RELATIONS

It was a favourite conviction of my late respected uncle and godfather, Barabbas Whitefeather—he fell in the very flower of his age, at only forty-five, a premature victim to the insalubrity of Bermuda, where he was stationed in a very public capacity by the British Government—it was, I say, a pet belief of the sagacious Barabbas that every man had within him what I think heathen philosophers

have called a particle of divine gold; but which my uncle, in the fine simplicity of his nature, and at the same time humanely accommodating his language to the lowest understanding of his species, denominated "a bit of the swindler."

Discriminating reader, Barabbas Whitefeather was a man of homespun wit, who chewed not his words until they had lost all their original form and vigour; no, he flung them from him with the air of a man who knows he is laying down a guinea of the best mint gold, and not timidly and sneakingly, like a passer of gilt copper.

"Every man has within him a bit of the swindler!"

The sentence fell upon me in the days of my earliest childhood; yes, it was in that ductile, happy, and susceptible season of life that the words of my uncle Barabbas—precious seed!—dropped into my infant heart, where—but let me not boast, let me rather indulge in the luxury of memory—yes, suffer me, complying reader, to carry you into the presence of my sainted uncle: bear with me whilst with affectionate reverence I call up from the abyss of time the interesting shadow of Barabbas Whitefeather.

It was my birthday—I was six years old. I had been promised that that day should be distinguished by a circumstance which, as we advance in life and become involved in the meshes of the world, is apt to be forgotten, albeit of the first importance at the time—I was to be breeched. *I was not.* I can only remember that a cloud seemed suddenly to have fallen upon our house—that my father would come home long after the lamb had lain down to rest, and would still leave the domestic roof before the rising of the lark, that his temper, generally rough, became much rougher; and that, only a few days before my birthday, on expressing my infantine delights at the trumpets blown before the newly-arrived judges, he rebuked me with unwonted emphasis, at the same time wishing the trumpets and the judges, as I then conceived, very oddly

incorporated with one another. I was then within a few days of six years old—I was a fine, tall, plump child, and on my birthday was to have been breeched. The neighbourhood called for it. I repeat it, my birthday came and passed, and found and left me still in coats.

That day, however, was ordained to be the most eventful of my life. It is that day which, if the world shall continue to remember the deeds of Captain Barabbas Whitefeather, must be held by posterity in especial respect. It is to that day that I owe everything; and what I owe, it would be the worst of affectation in the world to deny or to forget. To proceed with my history.

"Brab,"—it was thus my father was wont to tamper with the euphony of Barabbas,—"Brab, nunkey wants to see you; so you must toddle with me."

Some weeks had elapsed since I had seen uncle Barabbas; and at his name visions of cakes and apples, peg-tops and whipping-tops, rose before me. Like Agesilaus, Socrates, Yorick, and other men whom I do not hesitate to call of his kidney, my uncle would chequer and ameliorate the labour of public life by sporting with little children. "He hath borne me on his back a thousand times." I was of course delighted at the prospect of visiting my uncle; but was at the same time made to wonder at the preparation of my father, who carefully bound up one of his eyes, glued large whiskers on his cheeks, and otherwise so disguised himself that, although I saw him do it, I could scarcely believe it was he. However, I thought it was all to have some game with Uncle Barabbas—and in my childishness crowed with laughter at anticipation of the sport.

I walked with my father, and in about half-an-hour came to a very large house, a place I had never seen before: for my dear mother, always fuming about fevers and measles, kept me close at home. My father, suddenly walking very

lame, knocked at the door, and through a cold that had come on him all in a minute, asked hoarsely enough for my uncle. The man let us in, and then another man went before us; and then I knew I was in a place where there were heaps of gold and diamonds, for the man unlocked and locked again at least a dozen doors. I give my childish impressions, which I entreat the reader not to smile at, but to remember the simplicity and ingenuousness of my age. Well, after a time, we were led into an open court, where some gentlemen were throwing up halfpence, and two on a bench were pushing straws; and there was one dancing, and one or two singing, and all as happy as birds.

I looked round the place and saw uncle Barabbas smoking in a corner. I was about to call him when my father gave my arm such a pull I thought it was broken; and so I resolved to say nothing, but to wait and see the fun that father would play off upon uncle. Sure enough Barabbas never knew him; and though my uncle patted me upon the head, he had, I thought, forgotten me, for he gave me nothing. My father and my uncle talked together for a long time; when—I see my uncle now—Barabbas suddenly brought himself up, and raising his head, and extending his right arm, the palm open, he said in a solemn voice:—

"Depend upon it, every man has within him a bit of the swindler."

My father shook his head; whereupon my uncle, for he was very scholarly, and could talk for an hour without stopping, proceeded as follows:—I am perfectly certain as to the words, having subsequently found the whole written speech among other of my uncle's papers; Barabbas, like some other wits and orators, carefully putting in pen and ink any brilliant thought that struck him—any argument that was a hobby with him, that he might at proper season extemporaneously bring it forth to the delight and astonish-

ment of his hearers. My father shook his head at the dogma of my uncle, who, without stop, continued :—

"Are you so ignorant as to believe in the deficiency of mankind in general—to imagine that nature is so partial a mother as to dower with her best gifts only a few of her children, leaving the multitude defenceless, unarmed? My dear sir,"—here my uncle lowered his voice,—"amend your ignorance—be just to nature. Do you see tigers whelped without claws—elephants calved that never have tusks—rattlesnakes hatched with no stings? Is nature so niggard—so partial—so unjust? No—philosophers and conquerors have made their marks, and signed their names to the fact—to swindle is to exhibit the peculiar attribute of the human animal; it is at once the triumph and distinguishing faculty of the race. But you will say, do all men swindle? and I ask, do all snakes sting—all elephants gore? There is, however, an unanswerable argument which proves that men, when gregarious, are inevitably swindlers; at least, if they are not, let not the failing be placed to their account; they would be, if they might. Let me put a case. You recollect Gloss, the retired merchant? What an excellent man was Gloss! A pattern man to make a whole generation by! Nobody could surpass him in what is called honesty, rectitude, moral propriety, and other gibberish. Well, Gloss joins a 'Board'; he becomes one of a community; and, immediately, the latent feeling asserts itself: he is a backbone man with the rest of his brotherhood; and though as simple Gloss, and not a member of the 'board,' he is the same as ever, yet when acting with his fellows, when one of the body corporate, when he merges the man Gloss in the board member, the inherent faculty becomes active, and he gratifies the instinct, or the refined reason, or whatever men agree to call it—and complacently swindles with the rest. He cannot do otherwise: human nature is tested by the

occasion; and if, under the circumstances, he refuse to swindle, he ceases to be a man. Swindling, my dear sir" —and here my uncle spoke in a tremulous voice, and my father seemed touched by the emotion—"Swindling, my dear sir, has indeed a far more comprehensive meaning than that superficially awarded to it by, possibly, very respectable people. Good soldiers may fight, pillage, and violate under a banner, and yet, in truth, shall not be able to read and interpret the legend emblazoned on it."

I could perceive that my father did not perfectly understand this. He, therefore, nodded assentingly, and my uncle, with new animation, proceeded:—

"When I reflect on the extensive and subtle operation of the faculty—when I perceive that, in this our best possible social state, it is, so to speak, the cement that keeps society together; the bond of union; the very salt of human government—it does, I confess it, irk me to find men ungraciously deny its existence, putting off its triumphs upon other motives, and depriving swindling of the glory of its deeds. Strange perversion of human intellect—laughable contradiction of moral purposes! Thus, the politician flutters at the very breath of swindler; thus, the stockbroker struts and swells, and lays his hand upon his waistcoat with a blank look of wondering innocence at the slightest allusion to the faculty that makes a man of him—to which he owes his carriage and country house, his conservatories and his pineries; and above all, the flattering hope of calling Lord Giggleton son-in-law; his lordship being over head, and, what is more, over ears in love with Arabella's guineas. And yet, such is the base, the black ingratitude of human nature, that this man, this most adroit and lucky stockbroker, starts even at the name of swindler! He indignantly denies the slightest obligation to the higher faculty—the *mens divinior* of the cabinet, the mart, and the counting-house. Look at Sir Godfrey Measles, the illustrious pork con-

tractor, in whom our brave and magnanimous sailors confide for dinners. Did he not in the most handsome way forfeit a fine to his king and country for having failed to supply swine's flesh at so much per stone? And then, having paid his fine like a patriot and a man,—did he not, having before bought up all the pork to be had—did he not, with the gushing feelings of a philanthropist, offer it at three times the contract price? Now what was this? Men who veil their meaning in allegory may say that Sir Godfrey Measles 'drove his pigs to a fine market.' For myself, I elevate the homely phrase of pig-driver into the more ennobling name of swindler. Others may say that Sir Godfrey only traded—I stick to my belief; I say he swindled. More: I reverence him for the act; my only deep regret is, that he should have failed in an ingenuous gratitude, and denied the action of the higher principle. I have long looked upon the world, and, with sorrow, I say it, in nothing do the generations of successful men show so much cold and callous ingratitude as in their treatment of their guardian genius, that prettiest of Pucks, that best of Robin Goodfellows, that deftest of household fairies, hight Swindling!"

My father cast his one eye towards his eloquent brother with a look of speaking admiration; and, although there was a pause, did not presume to make any rejoinder. My uncle proceeded:—

"But why number examples? Why attempt to prove that which every man, if he would but consult the recesses of his own bosom, must truly know? Ask all the professions; demand of the lawyer, with yellow, studious cheek, wherefore he should coin gold out of little strips of paper, written over by youthful scribes at two or three shillings per diem. Request him to give you the philosophy of costs—the exquisite meaning of appearance and declaration, and reply and rejoinder, and all the thousand terms invented by the most cunning class of labourers, the overlookers at

the building of Babel. Ask the sleek practitioner to what he owes his fortune. To common-sense—to justice—to the fair and rational barter of labour for shillings? If he be a hypocrite—if he be resolved to clap in with the world, and carry on a profitable duplicity, he will swell like a bull-frog at the query, and, forgetful of his knuckles, will strike his heart, answering with the big-mouthed 'Yes!' But if at the end of a long practice there should by miracle remain in that attorney's bosom a throb of truth, he will blandly, yet significantly smile at the words—the counters men play with—common-sense and justice, and magnanimously and unblushingly declare his debt to—swindling!

"Is it otherwise with the physician, who sells his guesses for truth, and doubts and doubts a patient into the grave, whilst his medicinal palm is open for the guinea? When the apothecary vends cinnamon and peppermint water for *elixir vitæ*, doth he practise a noble art? Yea; for, safely and successfully, he—swindles.

"When the tradesman—his housemaid at the time perhaps in Bridewell for petty larceny committed on the greasepot—when he, smiling across the counter at his victim, puts off knowingly the poorest commodity at the highest price, how stands he in relation to his captive handmaid? Why, Rebecca has robbed, but the tradesman has only driven his trade: the slut has for ever and for ever lost her character, with it seven pounds *per annum*, and, it may be, tea and sugar included—but for Mr Jackson, her master, he has turned the profit penny; he has—but all in the way of business—swindled."

"It is very true," exclaimed my father with an oath, "it is very true. When what is swindling isn't swindling according to law, it's a fortune to a man; but when it's agin law, and found out——"

"The result I know," cried my uncle, a slight tint of red suffusing his manly cheek. "All mankind may be divided

into two classes: the swindlers according to custom and to law, and the swindlers according to the bent of their natural genius."

"True agin," cried my father, slapping his thigh.

"Still, the propensity," said my uncle, "is universal: men only want temptation. It is extraordinary how, like a chain, the feeling runs from breast to breast. Jack Smasher was one of the prettiest hands at coining; and more, he was blessed with a wife born, I should say, with a genius for passing bad money. She took a crown—one of her husband's base-begotten offspring—purchased with it three pennyworth of rhubarb from a Quaker chemist, who—undone man!—handed over four-and-ninepence change. Aminadab Straightback was, even among his brethren, the brightest child of truth. In due season Aminadab detected the guileful crown, and in his own clear breast resolved to destroy it. However, it remained by the strangest accident in his till, and by an accident still more extraordinary, was given in part of change for a guinea to a gentleman a little the worse for liquor, who on his way home to bed took the precaution of dropping into Straightback's for a box of—his own patent—anti-bacchic pills. In the morning the vinous gentleman discovered the pocket-piece, but as he had changed more than one guinea, could not with certainty detect the giver of the counterfeit. No matter. It remained loose with other money in his pocket, and one day, to his own surprise, he found he had passed it. He had taken a journey, and it was very dark when, in the handsomest manner, he fee'd the coachman. The poor man who drove the Tally-ho did not realise more than £400 per annum, and could not afford to lose five shillings; hence Smasher's crown became at a fitting opportunity the property of a sand-blind old gentlewoman, who, her loss discovered, lifted up her hands at the iniquity of the

world, and put aside the brassy wickedness. The good old soul never missed a charity sermon. The Reverend Mr Sulphurtongue made a sweet discourse in favour of the conversion of the Jews, and the churchwardens condescended to hold each a plate. To the great disgust of the discoverers, a bad crown was detected amongst the subscribed half-crowns and shillings. The beadle was directed to destroy it. He intended to do so, but, in pure forgetfulness, passed it one day for purl; the landlady of the 'George' having, as she said 'taken it, was resolved not to lose it,' and by some accident it was given to a pedlar, who, after a walk of twenty miles, entered an ale-house, took his supper of bread and cheese, went to bed, rose, and proffered for his account Jack Smasher's pocket-piece. The pedlar was immediately given into the hands of a constable, taken before a magistrate, and ordered to be imprisoned and whipped as a passer of counterfeit coin."

"See what luck is!" cried my father; "it's the Quaker *what* should have lost the dollar."

"He couldn't do it; for though he was a most respectable person, and lived and died with that character, he was but a man. He had been swindled—the link of the chain was touched, and it vibrated—you perceive, it vibrated?"

Again my father nodded.

"Yes," exclaimed Barabbas Whitefeather, "I repeat it—the sympathy is universal. All men can, do, or might, swindle. Though with many the propensity be latent, it surely exists, and needs but the happy moment to be awakened into life. The proof is easy: take ten, twenty, thirty men — creatures of light; admirable, estimable, conscientious persons; by-words of excellence, proverbs of truth in their individual dealings; and yet, make of them a 'board'—a 'committee'—a 'council'—a 'company'—no matter what may be the collective name by

which they may be known—and immediately every member will acknowledge the quickening of a feeling—a sudden growth of an indomitable lust to—swindle. What is this but a proof of the faculty—as I have said—dormant, but requiring only the necessary agent to awaken it? Oh! let no man perk himself up in the pride of his innocence—strut and pout, big with the prejudice of respectability! He knows not the mystery of his own nature; for though to his own eyes he shall be a saint, he will, when time and purpose shall see fit to call his better feelings into life, he will, he must, he cannot do otherwise than—swindle."

My father, though a strong man, was much affected.

"As for you, my dear child," said my uncle, taking me by the hand, kissing me, and looking benevolently upon me, "as for you, remember the words of Barabbas Whitefeather. At present you know not their worth, but a time will come when better than pearls or gold will be this my parting council to you. Throughout your life do nought but swindle. If you can, swindle on the right side of the statute, but at all events, my dear child," —even now I feel the pressure of that wise man's lip, the warm tear trickling down my cheeks,—"at all events, Barabbas, swindle!"

I am now in my nine-and-thirtieth year; and from my first day of discretion until this, the season of ripest manhood, I can, laying my hand upon my heart, most conscientiously declare that never for a moment have I forgotten the last injunction of the best of uncles. But why should I speak on this head? The world will do me justice.

My uncle shook my parent by the hand. "Good-bye," he said; "we may never meet again, for I am now two-and-forty, and you know"—this I could *not* understand—"you know *it's fourteen penn'orth.*"

My father, choking with emotion, cried, "D—n 'em!" We quitted my uncle; and I trust I shall not be accused of adopting the language of hyperbole, when I state that we quitted him with feelings far more easy of conception than description.

Only a twelvemonth after this, I lost my excellent father. It may prove to the giddy and the vain the uncertainty of life, when I state that my worthy parent was in robust health one minute and dead the next. It may also prove that he had held some place in the world, when I assure the reader that crowds of people flocked to our house to pay honour to his cold remains; which, for the benefit of his widow and son, were exhibited at sixpence a head to grown persons, and half-price for children. I should be unjust to my parent's memory were I to withhold another circumstance illustrative of the consequence of my father to the world at large: the night-cap in which he died was purchased by a gentleman, a lover of the fine arts, after a severe contest with other bidders, for two guineas.

And so much for my uncle and my father, both worthy of the name of Whitefeather.

CHAPTER II

CAPTAIN WHITEFEATHER TAKES AN ENLARGED VIEW OF SWINDLING. SOCIAL EVILS AND THEIR REMEDY

No—the theme is too pregnant with circumstance; too vast—too voluminous. Let me then subdue the vain, though laudable, ambition—let me repress the fond, the wild desire of such distinction. Is it for a single pen to write the History of Swindling? Is it for one man to chronicle, with scrupulous fidelity, the rise and progress of the exquisite art (for I must call it so)? Is it for one

curious pair of eyes—one toilsome hand—to pore over and put down the many million facts to be registered in a complete body of the Science? Could the life of a patriarch, even though he worked the hours of a cotton-spinner, suffice for the labour? Consider, Barabbas, what running to and fro—what fetching and carrying of truths—what sifting and winnowing of chaff and husk—what gold-washing—what pearl-diving! Now picking up stray matter for your work in Egypt—now, with a thought, among the sages in India—now off, it may be, upon a wild-goose chase to Arabia Petræa—now among the Scandinavians—and now, cold as a snowball, to be called away to the opium-sellers at the walls of the Tartars! Is it possible for one man, though with ribs of brass and soles of adamant, to go through the toil and travel? And this, be it remarked, will only take in the first thousand years or so of the age of our dear, ill-used mother earth. How much remains to be done—what crooked ways to thread—what dirt and rust to scratch away—what inscriptions to guess at—what monuments to measure—even before you come to Semiramis! And when, reeling like a porter under a thousand-weight of facts—for a very few facts make a pound—you arrive at Semiramis, have you disciplined yourself to bear the indifference of a superficial generation—to be asked by listless ignorance, "Who the devil is Semiramis?" Dear Barabbas, your yearnings are indeed most noble; but there is a limit to human action—there is a point where man must stop. The task is not earthly; or, if indeed it be a mortal labour, it is only to be achieved by the united heads and hands of many. A band of hard-working encyclopædists—temperate labourers living upon bread and water and figs—might possibly, in the course of a few lustres, produce some hundred volumes of the work; but a complete body of swindling from the birth of time to its present lustihood, it is a thing only to be dreamed of—

a glorious phantasm—a magnificent but most deceitful vision!

But grant it done. Say that the last proof—the ten millionth sheet—lies before you, the smooth-faced devil waiting at your garret door to carry off the corrected matter for the press. Say that it is printed, published, and the whole five hundred volumes folio scrupulously conned, as they doubtless would be, by the critics—alack! alack!—what a melancholy book hath the press groaned with—what a ghastly chronicle, what a blood-dyed, tear-stained record!

"A complete body of swindling!" Let us turn a few of the leaves. They creak like dungeon hinges! Are not the pictures terrible? Whole generations of men, thin-chapped, hollow-eyed, scourged and in bonds; fainting in mid-day; stark with the dews of night. Tens of thousands, living carcasses, in mines—thousands and thousands writhing in blood and agony upon the field—with the vassals of glory, a cloud of vultures, hovering to pick their bones. Next let us peep through prison bars, and—no; close the book—it is too shocking—one's marrow freezes, and the brain reels at it.

"Methinks," says the reader, "the Captain takes a too comprehensive view of his subject."

Right, sagacious reader; and yet, were the history of swindling in all its ramifications to be duly chronicled, the work would be no less voluminous, no jot less tragical. The present is, after all, not an auspicious age for folios; neither is it the best of all possible eras for the publication of disagreeable truths. Lazarus himself, to touch worldly sympathy, should in these days be a Lazarus in superfine cloth—the best cambric and the glossiest beaver; nay, he would be something the gainer by a waistcoat of gold-smeared velvet, and, at least, a chain of silver. To make iniquity or sorrow bearable, it is highly necessary that it

should be properly dressed. Hence, reader, I, Barabbas Whitefeather, instructed by the better spirit of the age, forego my first Utopian purpose, and leaving the full history of swindling to be written by a future college of sages, shall confine myself more immediately to the existing wants of the world—shall attend to the crying necessities of the present generation. Controlled by my better genius, I renounce folios.

After all, the world has not, as I at first superficially believed, so keen a want of a complete history of swindling: for how many books have been written which, although not professedly treating of the theme, are, by their very subject, works of reference and authority in the matter! What, for instance, is much of *Ancient History*? What *The Lives of the Roman Emperors*? What *The History of Conquests*? What *The History of Discovery*—from the first finding of Mesopotamia to the last providential flight upon New Zealand? If men will read not with their eyes alone, but with understanding hearts, how much is there in all these works, in all these narratives, that is indeed no other than materials for a complete body of swindling? Loose pearls that need stringing—scattered lights to be brought to one point? Indeed, to a contemplative mind, to a reader properly prepared for the perusal of history and biography, it is almost impossible for him to open a volume from which he should not gather knowledge of a swindling kind. It is often the very staple of a book, though to the shame of many writers, I grieve to say it, the subject is most ungenerously disguised under foreign trappings—passed off under a false name. Hence, reflecting that if men will look round them, they are not wholly destitute of works containing the philosophy of swindling on a grand historical scale—on an enlarged and transcendental plan—I shall endeavour to prevail upon myself to become merely useful, leaving it to the poorly ambitious to glitter

and to soar. Let other men make pedestals to themselves of unopened folios; they have their veneration—they are talked of, never read. I—I will descend among the crowd—will mix with my fellow-creatures—will right and left scatter among the children of innocence a "Handbook"—a veritable tome to be carried between the thumbs and fingers of men in their paths by day, and like a guardian and protecting genius to nestle in their bosoms at night. Yes, it shall be no large carcass of a book; no literary mammoth of a bygone time; a load for a shelf; but a light and dainty fairy for the palm. A "Handbook!"—Yes, there is a freshness, a beauty, a truthfulness in the name; it shall be "THE HANDBOOK OF SWINDLING!" Uncut folios, avaunt! and, thick as humming-birds in tropic groves, "Handbooks," in green and gold, trim your glowing winglets and flutter among men.[1]

Having resolved upon the mode in which I shall benefit humanity, having come to the determination to contract myself into the smallest possible size, that I may the more deftly make my way among the crowd, it is but due to myself—it is but just to my readers—to make known in a few words the extent and range of my purpose. That purpose is, I am proud to feel it, of the best wisdom, of the noblest benevolence; it is to make every man—at least every thinking, reasonable man, for I write not to blockheads—a SWINDLER. Yes; it is my aim to render him, at all

[1] The reader will perceive from the self-complacency with which the author talks of "Handbook," that he would pass the compound as purely one of his own invention. The editor, however, conceives it to be a part of his stern duty to state that a book printed at Baden-Baden, where the Captain was wont to retire in autumn for the benefit of the waters and other benefits—a book entitled (we give the English) "The Handbook of Cogging," was found among the Captain's other literary effects. He had, doubtless, forgotten that Handbook was from *Handbuch*. —[JOHN JACKDAW, Ed.]

points, armed for the contest of life—to prepare him for the cutting and thrusting and picking and stealing of this eventful passage. It is my purpose to make known a few golden rules—the result of a long and various experience—by which the attentive and quick-witted student may learn to play with men as he would play with pieces of chess, by which every move on the board of life may be his own, to the utter discomfiture of a plodding and merely painstaking opponent. And in all this there shall be nothing legally forbidden; nothing that shall suddenly shock your delicate nostrils, reader, with the smell of hemp: no, no; though turnkeys and the hangman walk about you, if you are an apt scholar, you shall snap your fingers at them, and swindle securely.

"And now," thinks the reader,—for I know his thoughts as well as I know my own whiskers,—"now the book begins to open; now the work warms up." Be not impatient.

Impressed as I am with the purpose of this inestimable little work, it befits the dignity of that purpose that there should be no unseemly haste, no helter-skelter in the communication of ideas. Were I writing the "HANDBOOK OF EGG-SUCKING," or any such domestic treatise, I might jump into my subject; but "SWINDLING" is not to be approached irreverently.

Its influence on the happiness of society is to be duly considered, that the maxims by which it is the hope of the author to recommend it may have their due weight upon the disciple; who, when he shall learn that swindling is, indeed, synonymous with self-preservation, will brush up his hair, take breath, and then, unless he have no more sensibility than a stock or stone, lapse into a state of the profoundest and most admiring attention. Yes; I was right—the pupil is now all ears.

Philanthropists and philosophers have come to the comfortable conclusion that there are in England too many

Englishmen. John Bull has played the Sultan, and has an alarmingly numerous family. Unhappily, however, he has not the Sultan's wealth—neither has he the Sultan's prerogative: he cannot feed all his sons and daughters; he must not choke or drown them. The bowstring and the Bosphorus are not for John. What then is to become of the family of Bull? Shall they tear each other piecemeal? Forgetful of their origin, shall they destroy one another in civil fight? *Amor patriæ*—humanity—all the finer and nobler feelings of the human heart revolt at the very thought. "What," the philanthropist will inquire with tears in his eyes—"what, then, is to be done with a superabundant population?" My reply is as brief as, I flatter myself, it is conclusive—they must swindle. We have been gradually adopting what I believe to be the only remedy for the national disease; we have for some years in many instances applied what I conceive to be the only cure for the social malady; but it is only when it shall be applied upon a grand scale, when, in fact, a curative science shall be professed and practised by men cognisant of all its subtle and most bountiful capabilities—for it is yet in its infancy—that the greatness of its social value will be thoroughly manifested and acknowledged.

It is allowed that all the professions are full to running over. The Church is crammed to suffocation with applicants for deaneries, prebends, vicarages; to say nothing of the thousands with their hearts fixed upon mitres. There is hardly standing room among the candidates for lawn and silk aprons.

In the Courts of Law there are wigs as thick as cauliflowers in Battersea Gardens. Besides, the sneaking spirit of the times has so enervated the British character, that Englishmen lack somewhat of that generous pugnacity which, in the days of our fathers, would precipitate them into the arena of the law to feed with their own flesh

the lions therein prowling. And when it happens that a gentleman with the true English blood in him shall resolve upon such noble sacrifice, why, so numerous are the animals awaiting him, that many a term shall pass, and not one of the *carnivora* shall have so much as a mouthful of the honest gentleman's flesh —shall not even make their mark in him. Consider it well, reader; count, if you can, the hundreds of excellent, watchful, well-disposed persons who, every morning during term, come down to the Courts to prey; and who, nevertheless, return to their homes all innocent of strife. Is not this a discouraging prospect for thousands of young men, most of them very willing to become Chancellor? But so it is; the profession has a greater supply than demand. In fifty years it will be thought great luck in a man to die Lord Chief Justice or Attorney-General.

In the Army, a profession that I have followed with an ardour peculiarly my own, can anything be more barren? Here am I, at the age of nine-and-thirty—I, who have—but no, the dignity of my subject, the national importance of this treatise, shall not be lessened or neglected by aught personal. Hence, I disdain to speak of a deep bayonet wound inflicted in the most dastardly manner in the small of my back, during my first campaign in Biscay—of a gash across my nose, from an enemy's sickle, when bivouacking in a hen-roost—of an imaginary fracture of the *os*—but no; I have said it, I will not mingle my private griefs, were I chicken-hearted enough to think them so, with matters of national interest. Besides, every man's country is proverbially ungrateful to him. Hence, I should despise myself did I more than allude, in the most evanescent way, to my heavy pecuniary losses in the service of Mexico, Chili, Peru, and other places too numerous to mention. But so it is; and what, I ask—what cares the commander-in-chief, sitting in his

pride of place at the Horse Guards—what cares he for my superb plum-pudding spotted charger, shot whilst grazing —it was only the day before I had been on him—by an enemy's vidette? What cares he for the loss of my three saddles, generously given up to be converted into highlows for my barefooted comrades? Yes, what—I must, I will ask it—cares the said commander-in-chief for the subsequent ignominy endured in consequence of that gallant steed—that by me devoted leather? Would it affect him, even for half-an-hour, to know that on my return to England—my beloved land!—after three years' absence, I was, at half-past six on a December morning, summoned by my landlady to see a Mr Jones, the said Mr Jones and a friend at the same time entering my apartment to remind me of my lost barb, my long-forgotten saddles? On that morning the commander-in-chief was, I doubt it not, snoring ingloriously in bed; little dreaming—it may be, little caring —that at that hour a brother soldier, placed between two big men in a small gig, was being conveyed at the rate of three miles an hour through fog and frost to Chancery Lane. I remember the Tyburn-like pace; for, let me do his benevolence justice, Mr Levi in the handsomest way apologised for not having had the horse *roughed*; adding that, as he had no other call to make that morning, "he was not in no 'urry."

Friendly reader, as an officer and a gentleman, I protest to you that I would not have even thus casually alluded to personal adventures did they not in the most striking, and I may add in the most pathetic manner illustrate the condition of a man who, with a military flame burning in his breast, generously offers his fire in the cause of nations. I might proceed; but the same modesty that has hitherto confined me to the rank of captain—and I may here allude to an infamous conspiracy on the part of the publisher and printers of the *Army List*, my name, as I have been in-

formed, having been maliciously omitted from that miscellany—the same modesty ties up my tongue on my own sufferings, my own deserts; or at most but lets it move in fitful murmurings. I have done! To proceed.

In the Army what are the hopes for superabundant young gentlemen, too spirited to starve, and too nice to dig? What, I ask, can be their hopes when a hypocritic sentimentality is gaining ground amongst those who are pleased to call themselves thinking men—a whining, sneaking abuse of glory and all its mighty purposes? There is a whimpering, white-faced cowardice that would extract all the stern immortal beauty from the battlefield, showing it to be no other than a place of butchery; that would display the valiant soldier with his throat cut, his bowels gloriously protruding, as a horrible sight—a piece of sacrilege done by man upon his fellow. And more than this, the same cant lifts up its face of turnip pallor, and pointing to where ten or twelve thousand stalwart fellows lie magnificently dead in blood and mire, has the effrontery to ask *cui bono*, as my old schoolmaster used to say—to put the impudent "*What's the good of it?*" I should abuse the ingenuousness of the young martial spirit were I to be silent on the innovation of this wicked principle; a principle which, with the infamous invention of the steam gun and the unhallowed introduction of the rocket brigade, will go far, or Captain Whitefeather is no prophet, to utterly destroy what I was once proud to think the instinct for war in the "paragon of animals." There is something inconceivably cowardly in the steam gun. Possessed of such engines, neither party will fight; and thus, nations always prepared for war, will hold continual peace. They will, so to speak, treat and deliberate at "full cock"; and being always ready, will never fire Is not this, I ask, a lamentable state of the world for a man to be born in? Let us, however, unflinchingly look truth in the face; by so doing we shall be the better prepared for

the evil days at hand, which to enable men to meet with some serenity of mind is the high purpose of this essay. Such days are nearer, much nearer, than those who have capital in powder mills like to dream of. We shall, of course, continue to keep a small standing army; but blank cartridges for birthdays will be the only order from the Horse Guards: bullets will become as rare as brilliants; whole tons of the death-dealing lead being sold to the type-founders. Laurel, "the meed of mighty conquerors"—why a whole grove of it will in the coming time be held of no more account, nay, of not so much, as a handful of dried marjoram. Have I dreamt it, or did I at a late philosophical meeting see a grave, pragmatic man rise from his seat, and when up, did I or did I not hear him seriously put it as a motion—that the planet Mars should be no longer called Mars, but be known to all future generations as JAMES WATT?

The Army, then, affords no refuge for the tens of thousands up to within these few years begotten, christened, suckled, nursed, fondled, schooled, petted, sported with, wept over by fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, grandfathers and grandmothers, for the glorious purposes of war. In such case is it not, I ask, the highest purpose of the philanthropist to find employment for men, who in happier times might have been usefully employed in burning the cottages of our enemies, lessening the numbers of our enemies' children (thus nipping a foe in the bud) on lances and bayonets, tearing up olive groves, carrying away the vanity of plate and pictures from enemies' churches, and in fire, and blood, and terror, planting the immortal bay? Since the British Lion is no longer to be fed upon Frenchmen's flesh, since he is henceforth to have a regimen of bread and milk and dates, it behoves us to see that he be gradually and duly prepared for the change in his diet, lest consumption fall upon him; or, a still greater point, lest he break all bonds and spread dismay around.

I have now, I trust, convincingly proved that the many asylums hitherto open to the pious, the wise, and the brave, are most inconveniently crammed; and that with less room for an increasing generation, the crowds will consequently become more dense, more clamorous, and in a word, more revolutionary. What is the remedy in this great natural crisis?

In one word make I answer—"Swindling!"

The philosophy of the present time is remarkable for its contempt—nay, for its wholesome abhorrence of poverty. A want of the luxuries of life is not merely inconvenient, it is positively ignominious. Hence what wrigglings, and strugglings, and heartburnings are every day acted and endured, to stand well with the world; that is, to stand without a hole in our hat or a damning rent in our small clothes! The modern man is wonderfully spiritualised by this philosophy; so much so that if he can secure to himself a display of the collar he is almost wholly unconscious of the absence of the shirt. Indeed so deep and so widely spread is this sentiment that the present time might be denominated the Age of Collars.

This spirit is on the advance; and it is the consciousness of this truth that impresses upon me the necessity of publishing a system by the adoption of which the country may be saved from a desolating revolution, and tens of thousands of future generations be secured those benefits and enjoyments which, as the sons of Adam, they are justified in expecting from the fulness of time.

I have proved, at least to my own satisfaction—a great sustaining point with an author—proved that by the natural course of things multitudes of generous spirits, before devoted to the professions, will be thrown upon their own resources—a dreadful condition for most men. What is to become of them? They cannot sink down into petty hucksters; railroads have destroyed the race of pedlars;

they must not, even if they had sufficient moral courage, hold forth their white hands as medicants; and if, stung by the injustice of society, they should in a moment of exasperation take to the road, why, highwaymen, save and except the highwaymen of fifty years ago, cease to be picturesque; and there is another heavy discouragement—the barbarous institution of a rural police. These fiery souls—the unemployed, superabundant young gentlemen—must, then, become knight-errants; that is, they must institute an order of chivalry peculiar to the age, and the best calculated to meet the wants of the sufferers. Let us take a single knight.

Here is Peter Muddleton, son of Jonah Muddleton, greengrocer, Houndsditch. Jonah Muddleton dies, leaving Peter heir to the goodwill of his shop, with seven hundred pounds in the three per cents. Well, had Peter fallen upon a less ambitious age, he would have tied his apron around him, walked behind the counter, and, saving a new coat of red and yellow paint bestowed upon the outside of the shop, and the substitution of "Peter" for "Jonah," things would have gone on even as when Muddleton senior was in the flesh. Peter, however, has a spirit above ha'porths of starch and pen'orths of pepper; and having, as he most potently believes, a gentlemanly taste, resolves to do anything that may become a gentleman, but certainly not keep to a shop. The seven hundred pounds, to Peter's real astonishment, become in a brief time about eight hundred shillings. A little month and Peter is penniless. What is to be done? Is Peter to be blamed for the spirit of the age? Could he, the hapless son of a vulgar sire, stultify himself to the fascinating and exalting appeals of an advancing era? No; he is, in the first instance, the victim of over refinement, and his moral perceptions having been rendered painfully acute to the degradation of a shop, and his physical man far too thin-skinned for the labour of Adam—and, moreover, having not a sixpence, and seeing

no gentlemanly mode of obtaining that much-abused yet most necessary little coin—he magnanimously resolves to eat and drink the best, and to wear the costliest, and all—without it. This is the determination of a genius: but even the most consummate wit may be assisted by the experience of others, and it would be a sorry affectation in me—it would be worse, it would be a gross injustice to my fellow-creatures—to deny that from my own observation of life I am incapable of the dearest services to young gentlemen so curiously placed as Peter Muddleton.

I have taken a single case; I have adduced one of the humblest examples; I already see a hundred thousand, many varying in their original rank in life; but all, at length, compelled by the spirit of the age to take their stand upon the broad ground of—SWINDLING.

All commercial operations of the present, and certainly of the future age, do and will tend to place the whole wealth of the country in a few hands. I am not vain enough to suppose that this book will enjoy a large daily sale for more than a hundred years; with all the partiality of an author, I cannot bring myself to expect that the state of society—whose wants the work is to meet—will endure above another century. However, I shall have done my duty, and I may safely leave the year 2000 to the active philanthropy of other WHITEFEATHERS. For more than the next hundred years there must, if my previous hypotheses are allowed, be an enormous amount of intelligence unemployed by the professions; the tangible fat of the land becoming every year engrossed by a smaller number. Now, to prevent any violent partition of property, it is—I can lay my hand on my heart and vow it—it is my purpose to make the few contribute in the easiest and pleasantest way to the wants of the many. Briefly, it is my object to show to the elegant unemployed how they may successfully and safely swindle the shopkeeping minority. The whole system is reduced

into a trial of wit; and if the swindler be a man of real genius, and the man swindled have a touch of generous feeling in him, he will forget what might be vulgarly called a loss in admiration of his conqueror. I have seen much of shopkeeping nature; and I am convinced that a man properly, wholly, and withal delicately swindled—where there have been no rubs or hitches in the work—that a man who, with all his eyes and ears about him, has nevertheless, without his knowing it, been turned, "like a chevril glove," inside out by the professor—that such a man, after the first burst of disappointment, feels but little of the bitterness of resentment; the small drop of gall in his heart is speedily taken up, and by a process delightful for the benevolent mind to consider, is assimilated to the milk of human kindness still running in the ventricles of the swindled; who—I have known such an instance—after a moody, savage look, will burst into a laugh, slap his leg, and with a confident, yea, with an exulting voice, declare that "no less a swindler could ever have swindled *him*." Here is a homage—an irresistible token of admiration—paid to one man; and if we consider, in proportion to the possessions of the others, how small, how trivial has been the tribute levied upon him, a positive enjoyment afforded to another! Believe it, reader, the swindled, if well swindled, is not without his joy.

This maxim is never to be lost sight of by the pupil. If he would disarm a man of the natural ferocity of the animal when fobbed, he must fob him blandly, graciously, completely. Humanity—a consideration of the feelings of others—demands this. How often have we seen a worthy man in a very tempest of passion—his face like copper—his eyes starting—his tongue stammering his wrongs:—"The —the—the—infamous scoundrel!—the barefaced villain! Did he think I was to be done in that way? Did he think me a fool?"

There it is, take the good man's goods; but, in the taking, see you never wound his self-love.

CHAPTER III

OF THE FACE NECESSARY TO A SWINDLER—(AN INCIDENTAL SPECULATION ON THE "DIVISION OF PROPERTY")—AND OF THE USE AND ABUSE OF MUSTACHIOS

It is a homely expression, often used in reply to a sarcasm on a personal deformity, "that we did not make ourselves." Not even a Professor of Political Economy can argue away this conviction, rooted as it is in the depths of the human heart. Much, however, can be done with the rude lump—if indeed it be rude—whereof man finds himself the ill-starred possessor. Hence, let no one moderately deformed despair of his fitness to join our brotherhood Hump backs, club feet, and bow shins have, it must be owned, their disadvantages for the service—notwithstanding, the genius of their owners may triumph over such outward obstacles. A fine face tastefully set in hair may be considered a blessing for the profession; yet it would be to inflict a great injustice on the higher uses of the science to suppose a mere face so framed all-sufficient. No; "we work by wit and not by whiskers." The outward man goes far, but he must depend upon the ethereal spark—upon the inward intelligence—for self-distinction.

And first for the Face of a Swindler. Men who set themselves up as judges of character—I have heard the sciolists—sometimes marvel that the sons of commerce should so frequently fall victims to some individual swindler; when he, the party swindling, is one of the most ingenuous creatures breathing; looking, in fact, the swindler that he is,—when from his eyebrows to the corners of his lips there

is painted in the largest human capitals the calling of the professor. The truth is, the unsuspecting men accustomed to pore over day-books and ledgers have not had sufficient time to learn to read human faces. They can on the instant, if put to the test, tell a good guinea from a bad one; but though they shall stare in the features of a human counterfeit for an hour or more, they cannot, one in a hundred, discover the washed brass from the true gold. More; though they shall hear the counterfeit—though the ring of its voice shall be the truest Brummagem—the trading man shall complacently rub his hands, satisfied that he is hearing the sweetest sound of the mint.

I confess it, to the honour of the trading community of this commercial country, I confess it; the success of some faces of my brotherhood upon men behind counters has been to me startling evidence of the unsophisticated character of the tradesman. For instance; there is Nobrowns, Scarceamag, Fleeceington, and others I could name—shall I own it?—I have sometimes felt myself humiliated by their prosperity. I have felt the science lowered by the facility with which they have ingratiated themselves into the favour of the jeweller, the coachmaker, the tailor. Had *I* kept shop, I have thought I should have shown Nobrowns to the door at the first glance of his eye; and without looking at Scarceamag, but simply hearing his base-metal voice, I should have told him I had nothing in his way, and straightway ordered him across the threshold. And yet these men have flourished for a score of years; and, at this moment, are prosperous swindlers. How is the enigma to be explained—how the more than Arcadian innocency of the dwellers in Bond Street and Regent Street to be philosophically accounted for? Is it, that men immersed in the profound abstraction of £ s. d. lose somewhat of the sagacity inherited and often improved by poorer souls; that, too much rapt by the splendid

visions of the future profits, they are less vigilant as to the danger of present credit? Providence, however, hath wisely partitioned its benefits. If it be given to Scarce-amag, with *his* face, to swindle and be poor—it is also allotted to Puddingtête, the tradesman, to be swindled and grow rich. Take this, then, my dear pupil, for an axiom: you may—since you cannot help it—look the greatest swindler in life; but if you shall hold your own counsel, your face shall, at least to the acute men behind counters, never reveal it. Tradesmen can read anything but customers' faces.[1] This truth is every day borne out by the success of fellows whose features have gone far to vulgarise the science. Ragamuffins who ought never to have aspired beyond the pea-and-thimble board at a country fair—knaves marked and impressed by the truthful hand of nature for the lowest offices of legerdemain have, trusting to the simplicity, the unsuspecting ingenuousness of a money-getting generation, to the marvellous innocency of the commercial body, made for themselves a reputation of the first class, or of very nearly the first class of the highest profession. Ultimately, in the advancement of society, these vulgar upstarts will be met by a greater number of competitors, elevated and accomplished with the graces of life, and the term swindler will be, as it ought to be, synonymous with gentleman. The commercial faculty will, on the other hand, be rendered more acute in its observation of human character; hence it will require a greater delicacy of style—

[1] I can scarcely believe that Captain Whitefeather was a reader of the Essays of David Hume; and yet a similar opinion—a friend of mine, a poor curate to whom I showed the Captain's MS., pointed it out to me—is expressed by the sceptic philosopher, who, in his Essay on "Delicacy of Taste," says:—"You will seldom find that mere men of the world, whatever strong sense they may be endowed with, are very nice in distinguishing characters, or in marking those insensible differences and gradations which make one man preferable to another."—[John Jackdaw, Ed.]

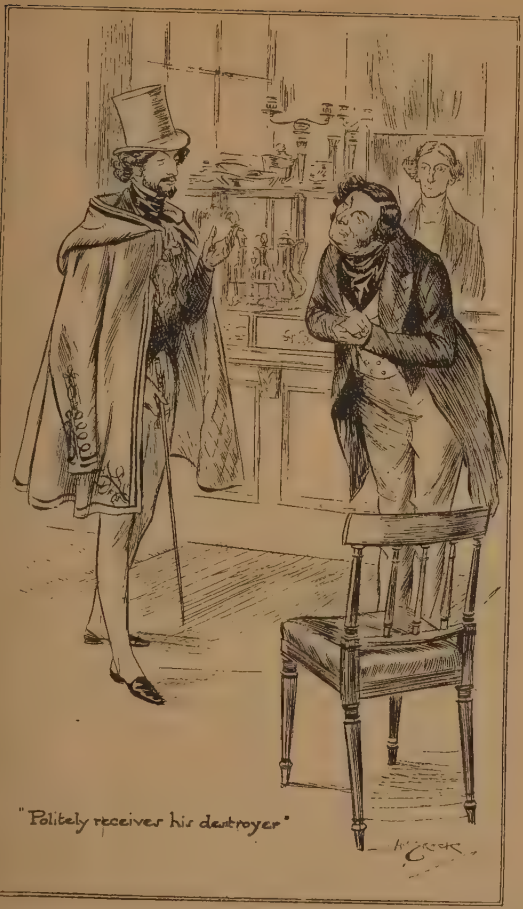
more imposing and a more winning manner to arrive at any distinction—indeed, even to make a clear paltry five hundred a year as a swindler, than in these times will suffice to ensure to a tolerably industrious man an income of a thousand. This is inevitable. When the tens of thousands of noble spirits, heretofore absorbed by the professions, are left to trade upon their wits—when all society is more strongly marked, more arbitrarily divided into two classes, the swindlers and the swindled—when, instead of a violent and ruthless division of property, as infamously as ignorantly insisted upon by certain firebrands—there is a graceful exchange of elegant patronage on the one side, and a profound expression of thanksgiving respect on the other, the character of the successful swindler will rise to its ordained and natural elevation, and a Whitefeather (pardon the honest vanity) take his place with many illustrious names sufficiently obvious to the philosophical reader. The time is happily passing away when brute violence is to achieve national good—when the price of bread is to be beaten down by a bludgeon, or wages raised upon a pike. It is therefore a matter of deep regret to the contemplative man, and such I am not ashamed to confess myself, to perceive how many gifted persons are, by a premature nativity, ill-placed. How many men at the present day breathing national arson and patriotic pillage—men who have so profoundly studied the *meum*, that they are entirely ignorant of that of *tuum*—would, born a few years hence, have shed a lustre, have conferred a dignity upon even an illustrious and dignified profession. Let me not be asked to enumerate examples—I eschew the personal for the general. It is enough that the eye of the philosopher can perceive in many a sulphureous patriot the indefatigable swindler; that the sage, pondering on the inevitable changes of society, can detect in a present Bull-ring Brutus all the misapplied qualities of a future Isaac Solomons!

Blissful time—glorious return of the golden age—when rapine and fire, and cutting and maiming shall no longer be the evils adopted by comprehensive minds to work out, as they conceive, a great good ; but when one half of the people shall live peaceably upon the other ; when the whole aim and end of every two men out of four shall be to possess themselves of their daily bread—(philosophers will receive the phrase in its more enlarged meaning)—by an art demanding in its exercise the highest and most chastened faculties of the moral creature. The two halves of society will then be fairly arrayed against each other ; and for ruthless weapons—for sword, dagger, and pistol on one side, and bayonet, sabre, and carbine on the other—we shall have the more peaceful and courteous instruments, silvery words, blandest smiles, and the happiest self-possession, opposed by cautious interrogation, wary looks and silent heavy doubtings. Here then is a contest worthy of intellectual beings! This is indeed a duello of the immortal principle! How poor, how savage, how unworthy of a rational creature to break into the peaceful dwelling of an honest silversmith—to fire his bed-curtains—to bruise and batter his ornate cream-jugs, his chased candlesticks, and embossed tankards,—or, the spoil carried off amidst the exulting howl of barbarians, to fling it into the hospitable melting-pot—how loathsome, how degrading this brutal mode of a division of property, to that refined and gracious system, the cunning birth of better times—the fruit of a loftier and truer consideration of man's dignity towards his fellow!

Let us consider the two pictures ; let us contemplate the working of the different principles. How revolting the scene of violence! How debasing to our common nature to witness a mob of denaturalised creatures bursting in the good man's door! How they scamper upstairs! Like festal savages they wave firebrands and torches about their heads as they rush into the sacred bedroom. The worthy

man says a short prayer, and thinks of his stock—his wife and daughters, trembling for their lives, are horrified at being seen in nightcaps with their hair in paper! All the house is in consternation; and, a touch of humanity softening the mob, they benevolently suffer the silversmith and his family to escape, in their night-clothes, over the roof, and descend, like cats, into the gutter of their neighbour. The shop is ransacked of everything; and now a sanguinary fight is going on behind the counter between two of the ruffians for the plated top of a pepper-castor. This—this is one principle of a division of property; as if property was only to be divided by the blaze of torches and the crackling of rafters! Turn we to the ennobling contrast.

Mark the swindler! How graciously he descends from his chariot—for the swindler of first-rate genius rarely marauds on foot—and with what a composed elegance, with what a perfect self-possession he enters the shop! There is something inexpressibly taking in his manner. Surveying him from head to foot, we cannot repress the opinion that the "age of chivalry" is *not* past. He is the knight of later times—the Chevalier Bayard in a round hat. *Sans peur* glows in his eyeball, and the whiteness of his kid gloves is *sans reproche*! Two or three centuries ago he had, with mailed hand, "shaken the bags of hoarding abbots," and now comes he, with a condescending smile at his mouth, to deal with a silversmith. See! he crosses the threshold—treads the shop. It is impossible to resist the fascination of his lofty courtesy. The tradesman, wary as he is—suspicious as loss after loss has made him—despite of himself, confesses the supremacy of the stranger, and, with a smiling lip, a twinkling eye, folded palms, and inclined back, politely receives his destroyer. A conversation ensues; and the swindler—I am of course putting the case of a man of genius—fastens upon the tradesman, who every moment becomes more deeply impressed with the



"Politely receives his destroyer"

consequence of his patron; and therefore, having flung to the winds all low suspicion, is the most obsequious, the most humble servant of the swindler. There is nothing too costly for him—nothing too curious; no order too difficult to be met—no time too short for the accomplishment of his wishes. The swindler is evidently a man of the very highest consequence; and the silversmith, if I may adopt a homely expression, is inevitably *done*, ay, done—

"—as brown as a berry."[1]

The swindler whirls away from the tradesman, who has attended him, bareheaded, to the kerbstone, and then the man of precious metals returns to his shop in that delightful serenity of mind, apt, I am told, to possess people with profits ranging from fifty to seventy-five in the hundred.

What—it will be asked—what, does Mr Giltspur, the silversmith, without further questions put, trust his service of plate, besides a magnificent suite of amethysts (for which the honourable Mr Thug expressed a sudden liking), to the honour of his customer? To be sure he does; and his blood simmering with a sense of profit, he orders them to be delivered at "——Hotel," where Mr Thug is staying; but which delightful and convenient hostelry he, shortly afterwards, suddenly leaves on the most imperative business. A thousand instances bear out the probability of Thug's success and Giltspur's discomfiture. People may talk about the innocence of a pastoral age: I am, from long experience, convinced of it, that the most innocent, the most unsuspecting, the most easily-taken biped on the face of the earth is —your London shopkeeper. Armed with proper weapons, it is almost impossible that he can escape you. The poor creature is weakness, imbecility itself; "Wear your eye thus," and as surely as the fluttering bird drops into the

[1] It will be seen that the Captain had some knowledge of Chaucer.—[John Jackdaw, Ed.]

mouth of the snake, as surely fall the tribe of Giltspurs into the folds of the Thugs.

Well, and is it not delightful that it should be so? Here is Giltspur, for a certain number of days at least, made very happy; he has delivered his goods, and has already calculated to the odd sevenpence-halfpenny the amount of profit. Thug has conferred upon him a great pleasure—passing, it must be owned—but sweet, very sweet, whilst it endures.

Does the reader still remember the picture of violence drawn in a former page? Does he still behold the pallid silversmith—his fainting wife—and blushing daughters? Does he yet hear the roar of the flames, as they come up the staircase—the fury of pillage in the shop below?

The same effect is produced by the swindler, but how different the cause! The "division of property" is just as complete—the fine, deep philosophy that preaches it equally well honoured; and yet, what grace on one side—what civility on the other; and, to one party at least, what tangible, enduring satisfaction! Who, then, with the smallest spark of human dignity within him would stoop to violence when he may "divide" with ease? The "multiplication" of the human animal is, indeed, according to the modern school-men, "vexation"; but the "division" of property—unless divided on the bland principles of swindling—would be infinitely worse. In the progress of society, then, it is by swindling, and by swindling only, that we shall escape the most grievous revolution.

To proceed with the personal qualifications necessary to a Swindler. He must have a face of purest brass. If handsome, all the better; yet, perhaps, expression is of greater importance than the mere proportion of feature. If, however, he *look* a Swindler—if to the contemplative men who peruse human lines, printed in the blackest ink on some human faces, he look his profession—his success with

the sages of trade is certain. It is, however, of the first importance that there should be no alloy in the face. It should, for instance, be as incapable of emotion as the bull hide on the shield of Ajax.[1] This, youthful Swindler, is the besetting danger; hence, bend all your energies to obtain a stony look of self-possession. Though a constable should put his "dead hand" upon your shoulder, and your very marrow should thrill at the touch—your face must remain motionless as the face of the Apollo Belvidere—your eye unquenched—your voice with not a crack in it. I will not disguise the difficulties of arriving at this superhuman placidity. Talk of the self-possession of a Cæsar—the coolness of a Napoleon—quackery all! What is there in the composure of a man who takes snuff whilst hundreds of other men's limbs are being blown into the air (to be wept over by the spirits of glory), with at the most a *sauve qui peut* for it; whilst, in the scale of advantage, there is a laurel wreath and a triumphant entry and civic addresses,—what is all this to the quiet dignity demanded of a swindler in a perilous situation—his splendid cabriolet, perhaps, waiting at the shop—whilst, sneaked out at the back door, Bob the apprentice has run for Police Officer Snatchem, F. No. 20, to attend immediately to our hero, who at his approach beholds a no dim vision of the very handsome police omnibus — the prison barber with his ignominious shears—and hears, or thinks he hears, the pathetic, admonitory address of Common Sergeant or Recorder? It may, according to a worn metaphor, take nerves of iron to direct an army; but they must be brass, and of the finest brass too, to swindle. Fighting is, indeed, a mechanic trade; millions can fight,—but how few can gracefully swindle! We know that the result of both

[1] I may, by the way, observe that the Captain, whose education was not equal to his parts, is indebted for a few of his classical allusions to another pen.—[JOHN JACKDAW, Ed.]

operations is often the same, but how inferior one to the other! Buonaparte brought a *few* pictures from Italy, which the world—Heaven knows!—made noise enough about. In warlike phrase he "took them" from a vanquished people: a poor, shabby act to brag of; but had he, unassisted by squadrons and battalions, and parks of artillery—had he, by the unassisted efforts of his own mind, with no other masked battery, no other weapon than his own hand and his own tongue,—had he robbed one dealer of a Correggio—another of a Raphael—a third of a Titian—a fourth of a Murillo—and so on,—it had indeed been an achievement to boast of; but to crack of the incident as one of the trophies of the army of Italy was the sublime of gasconading! My late friend Featherfinger—he died, poor fellow, having burst a blood-vessel from intense study at Macquarrie Harbour—had a magnificent bronze clock; a superb thing! a thing to make a man value time. Had I not pledged my honour to secrecy, I could write a history touching his possession of that clock, which, of itself, is enough to immortalise any one man. My honour, however, is sacred; and my lips are hushed. This much, probably, I may be permitted to observe: The industry—nay, that is a poor, unworthy term—the genius manifested by the indefatigable Featherfinger to possess that clock—methinks I see him now; poor fellow! seated with his Greek cap, his black satin morning gown figured with pink poppies—an Indian shawl (the *gage d'amour* of an Italian countess) about his waist—his feet in bead-embroidered slippers, the work, as he protested, of some heart-devoted heiress—his meerschaum in his mouth—in his hand a book, *Satan* or the *Lives of Highwaymen* (for he was passionately fond of light literature)—his tiger page, only three feet high, and warranted to grow no taller, in green and gold, with a breast-plate of best double gilt buttons, standing at a reverential distance—whilst the

bronze clock on the mantelpiece vibrated with its monitory, moralising—yes, moralising—*tick*, *tick*! Methinks I see him as I enter raise one eye from the page, nod, smile—and such a smile!—there was only one shopkeeper, and he was a philosophical member of the Society of Friends and dealer in *virtu*, that ever stood against it—smile, and then cast the other eye towards the clock itself with a look of touching reproach at my delay, or with a glance of approving pleasure at my punctuality. Methinks I see him—Gracious powers! That such a man should die at Macquarrie Harbour, taxed beyond his strength of study, a victim to—but no; loyalty to the Ministry was ever a virtue of the Whitefeathers, and I breathe no word against the Whigs! To hurry from the theme. Much has been said about the boldness, the fine contempt of public opinion shown by Napoleon when he took the horses of St Mark from Venice to place them on his own palace gate in Paris. Well, the act was not without its merit, but did I dare to write the story of Featherfinger's clock, the theft of Napoleon would, in comparison to the genius manifested by my friend, sink to the petty larceny committed by schoolboys upon apple stalls. But so it is; the finest history remains, and ever will remain, unwritten. The Venice horses have been celebrated by poets and historians, but posterity is left to bewilder itself with guesses on Featherfinger's clock. Yet—and I am prepared to meet the consequences of such an assertion—I am convinced that great as the conqueror was in all the varieties of the science, Buonaparte's horses must pass from the recollection of the earth; whereas Featherfinger's clock, duly chronicled, was a thing for time! It may be cited as an illustration of the injustice of Fortune—of the tricks she plays with the noble and the man—when the reader is informed that the tiger page of my dear friend—of him whose bones are

mouldering (for he *was* buried) in a foreign earth—of him born, as the poet says—

"To steal a grace beyond the reach of art"—

that that little cab-page—that tiger-moth fluttering as I have seen him with *billet-doux* about the carriage-lamps and round the torches of an opera night,—that he has at this moment a country-seat and grounds at Hackney, purchased and supported by the precarious profits of a night-house—that is, of a mansion hospitably open in the vicinity of Drury Lane, for the refreshment of travellers with beer, beef and oysters, from eleven at night until six in the morning. But so it is; a genius, like my departed friend, dies beggared at the last; whilst mere industry at forty-five grows his own pine apples!

I have, I trust, been sufficiently minute in my description of the face requisite to be put upon Swindling. In conclusion, I have only to enforce the necessity of the most rigid self-discipline to prevent even the most evanescent exhibition of what is conveniently called modesty; for the swindler who can blush is lost. His must be a brow whereon

"Shame is ashamed to sit."

A money-lender, a courtier, steeped to the lips in broken promises—a pick-pocket caught in the act, all of these may, if they can, blush and not be ruined; but woe to the swindler whose cheek admits the self-accusing tint! His face, like the face of the man in the moon, must look down upon all sorts of acted abominations, yet blench not.

Mustachios.—These *were* pretty things for the profession; but I grieve to say it, lawyers' clerks, linen-drapers' apprentices, players out of place, and even pedestrian vendors of lucifer matches, have detracted from their exclusive importance; hence, I would counsel the youthful, sanguine swindler to eschew what indeed vulgar usage has

rendered a very questionable advantage, and to swindle with clean lips. It is enough to break the heart of a rabbi to see how one of "Heaven's best gifts," the human beard, is in these hirsute days cut and notched according to the impudence or ignorance of the wearer. It is said of the French that they have a thousand ways of cooking an egg: let it be our boast that we have as many modes of dressing the chin. I have, I hope, a love of the picturesque, as the world will one day know from a work of mine still, unhappily, in manuscript.[1] I, therefore, am a passionate admirer of the beard of patriarchal growth; but for your nasty, stunted, straggly, ragged, edgy things—now like the skin of a dog with the mange, now like the end of a skein of whitey-brown thread, now as if culled from chopped hay, and now as if cut from a singed blanket—pah!—were I caliph for a day—but no matter, let me not wander to legislation, but stick to my higher subject—Swindling. I say, then, to my disciple, eschew mustachios. At best they are a doubtful good. If, however, you are determined to wear them, let me hope that their hue is black as death. If, on the contrary, Heaven has awarded you a pair of pale gold or deep carrot colour, tamper not with them, but shave. Never, like Richard, think to stand "the hazard of the *die*"; if so, your case is desperate. I knew three promising young fellows, all of whom laid their ruin at the door of Mr Rowland. But—for I like to anticipate—it may be asked, Do you always, Captain Whitefeather, walk abroad with unrazored lips? To this I boldly answer that—for I was justified in the vanity—I did wear an adorned mouth; more, that a lady, who shall be nameless, was in hysterics (of course at intervals) for three days, when my mustachios fell; but no, I could not condescend to wear them when I saw—yes, I confess it—even a better pair

[1] *The Handbook of Ratcliff Highway*, an inestimable work (when printed) for the stranger in London.—[JOHN JACKDAW, Ed.]

than my own upon the face of a fellow in the Surrey gallery, selling play-bills, Spanish nuts, and ginger beer. What the revolution of society may in time produce it would of course be impudence in me, who am not a Paternoster Row astrologer, to declare; but, for the next five-and-twenty years, mustachios will, I think, be a dangerous decoration for the swindler. So much business has been done with them that suspicion will have scarcely subsided under at least another quarter of a century. The horse-tails of Ibrahim Pacha have not been more triumphant; but victory will not always perch upon the same banner.

The swindler should not at the present day hope to take the Philistines by the strength of his hair. No; let him shave, and put the barest face upon the dignity of his profession—it cannot be *too* bare.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE PARENTAGE AND NAME OF A SWINDLER—OF HIS EQUIPAGE—OF HIS MORAL PHILOSOPHY

The professor of our distinguished art has, it must be conceded, this peculiar and most grateful advantage—he may choose his ancestors. With the *Peerage* or the *Red Book* open before him, it lies within his own breast to decide whether he shall have come from the loins of a Norman baron—of one of the boldest of that invincible band of marauders and thieves who jumped on Hastings beach—or whether he shall be the last of a collateral branch of the Strozzi, or Frangepani, or of any other Italian house whose beginning, in the opinion of divers heralds, dates from beyond Numa. Here is a glorious prerogative! The swindler may make his own coat-of-arms, although his immediate father walked the earth without a shirt. Show

me any other man possessing so delicious a privilege. With long rolls of knights and barons, and earls and princes before him, how the swindler may play the epicure with the mighty dead! How loftily, yet how serenely, may he contemplate the titled dust of bygone generations! Even as your dainty snuff-taker coquets with a dozen samples of the odoriferous tobacco, so may the swindler, pondering on a choice of father and mother, taste with his moral sense the various claims of buried greatness. Now, he likes this Prince's mixture—and now this. He is puzzled, perplexed by the hundred appeals to his filial affection. He is one minute determined to have come from the Montmorencys—the next, he feels a yearning towards the Talbots—and in a few seconds, lo! he will make a kindred to himself from the golden line of D'Este. If the reader possess imagination—and if he do not I tremble for my book—he must sympathise with the delightful tumult in the swindler's brain and breast, or rather brain alone—(for with your true swindler the brain must have played the Aaron's rod with the heart, swallowing it whole; a miracle very often performed in the anatomy of great public men)—he must feel more than commonly interested in the contest which is to decide the parentage of our hero. With this allusion to the delicacy of the juncture, we leave the swindler at his books, merely impressing upon him the necessity of choosing a long way back—of electing an ancestor from some by-way catacomb — some seldom visited cemetery — some "untrod on corner i' the earth." Nor let him despair; there are at least a round thousand or two of dukes and princes sufficiently obscure in their winding-sheets, albeit possibly brave and blatant enough when in the flesh, from whom the swindler may scratch out a great progenitor. All that is necessary is that the beginner of the family shall have lived in the dim twilight of civilisation—that he shall be so far away that all the Herald's Colleges, with all their

spectacles upon their collective noses, shall not be able to perceive whether the disentombed thing be flesh or phantom. Very satisfactory progenitors have been found, with arms to match, of thew and sinew just as questionable. If, however, the swindler *will* have a mighty ancestor, let him, I repeat, go far enough for him: when a man wants a marquis, or an earl, or a count, for his great-grandfather, he should not grudge a long walk—even though he walk blindfold and backwards—for the commodity. So much for the ambitious swindler.

The swindler, however, who trusts to his unassisted genius, and disdains the lustre of any specious trophies from the churchyard, may with a very laudable pride refuse to make to himself a grandfather, being possibly contented with the grandsire selected by his grandmother for him. Some men —and let me do all homage to their simplicity—turn up their noses at the genealogical tree, even though its roots were struck at Tyburn: the swindler of sanguine spirit may be of this proud kidney; and all the better: I augur more of his ultimate triumph. However, though he shall refuse a herald-begotten progenitor, it may be highly necessary for him that he shall choose a name. His own may have become celebrated for family achievements wide away of his purpose; and therefore, whilst with filial affection he sticks to his own father and mother, disdaining the blood of Norman, Guelph, or Ghibelline—it may be imperative upon him to assume a nominal device not hitherto borne by any of his kin. The swindler wants a name. Here, then, we approach a delicate, yes, a difficult point. Let me, however, set out with a solemn injunction to the swindler, that in the choice of a name "he throw away ambition." Considerable nicety is required in the selection of a good title for swindling; a number of fine young fellows having—if I may lighten the solemnity of this essay with a familiar phrase—"let the cat out of the bag" by the incautious assumption of a high-

sounding, flowery, no-meaning patronymic. The truth is, the detestable rage for novels has so familiarised the world with a set of sugar-and-water heroes—of exquisite gentlemen, all of them worthy of a glass case lest the flies should soil them—that their very excess of virtue has put them on the *hue and cry* of suspicion. Hence "*Delacour*," "*Erpingham*," "*Rosenthorp*," "*Millefleur*," and a thousand others of the courtly and sweet-smelling class, all in their time excellent names for swindling (that is, for swindling in the higher sense of the term, for in "fine wire wove" they swindle still), are now no other than brands, *stigmata*, by which the calling of the professor is instantly suspected. Hence, my dear pupil, take no sweet, pastry-cook name from a novel; cull no flower from a play-bill; but look, as either a poet or a member of Parliament says, I forget which, "look abroad into universality" for the thing desired. As you walk the street cast your eyes above the door of the worthy shopkeeper. A thousand to one that in a day's saunter you will possess yourself, and from such a source, of a name in every respect unexceptionable. Yes, from the board of the thriving, honest, painstaking, till-respecting tradesman. And if so, how ingenious, how pleasant withal, to obtain one of your best weapons from, so to speak, the armoury of the enemy, to be fleshed immediately upon him! It is perhaps unnecessary to warn the young swindler that he must not be too homely in his choice. There is a class of names which, from their very abundance, makes it a matter of constructive ignominy to swindle under them. And some of these are Jones, Walsh, Welsh, Thomson, Johnson, Dobson, White, Brown, Williams, Simpson, Smithson, and that multitudinous monosyllable, Smith! If, in a moment of hilarity you break a lamp, wrench off a knocker, or snap a bell wire, why any one of these names may be, as of course every gentleman well knows, confidently given in to the night constable; but to attempt to swindle under them betrays a

petty larceny spirit in the professor, from which my experience looks for little present gain or future reputation. No; the name of a swindler should be like the wardrobe of the true gentleman—a thing not challenging vulgar attention; but, if examined, found to be of the very best material and of the choicest workmanship. Hence let the swindler choose between a *clinquant* (I do believe this is almost the first bit of French appearing in the essay, for the which I confess myself deficient in the graces of modern literature[1]), between the *clinquant* of novel heroes and the homeliness of "base mechanics"—let his name be a solid, substantial, downright English name.

[1] The Captain is in error. Though his essay is, assuredly, barren of "the tongues," the author knows more of bookmaking than he apparently chooses to confess. -[John Jackdaw, Ed.]

I say English, for I think we have had too long a peace to render the assumption of a foreign title and a foreign accent worth the trouble, the incessant watchfulness, the continual stretch of a man's intellects: the call upon his faculties to keep up the character should be well rewarded, for the hazard of self-discovery is very great. I know a remarkable instance of the danger. There was Thaddeus Ballynamuck—he once, with merely a backward touch of his hand, broke the jaw of the manager of a minor theatre who dared to offer him terms to bring him out as a Patagonian giant—there was Thaddeus, who had made a splendid six weeks' campaign at the West-end as an Italian count; how admirably did he with the *lingua Toscana* flavour his native Connaught! The Duke of Tuscany was his dear friend; and not without reason; for Thaddeus at a boar hunt had stood between the boar and the duke, receiving the tusks of the beast in his hunting jacket, for the which he had obtained a great many Italian orders, and on the strength of which he gave a great many English ones. Well, Thaddeus, though considered as true an Italian as the poet Asso,[1] was one morning driven to the necessity of shaving himself, changing his southern name, and retiring for a few weeks to the privacy of Southend. He was betrayed into self-discovery by an excess of benevolence—the more was the pity. Thus it was. He always carried in his cab a beautiful dove-coloured Italian greyhound, its legs not much thicker than goose quills, and its tail like bent wire—the gift of the Marchesa di Lungabarba. The dog had leaped from the cab and followed its master into the office of Finings, the wine merchant. Thaddeus had before very considerably patronised Finings, and was about to give him a splendid order for some choice port to be shipped to his friend the duke—and how the eyes of Finings twinkled at the title of his highness!—when the cellarman, a brawny, heavy fellow from Somerset, shambled

[1] The Captain doubtless means Tasso—[JOHN JACKDAW, Ed.].

into the office and trod, with all his fourteen stone, upon the delicate toes of Angelo the greyhound: the dog howled with agony piercing enough to crack the parchment heart of an old maid, when the Captain—he was, at the moment, with the greatest difficulty endeavouring to make himself understood to the wine merchant—turned round, and, to the astonishment of Finings, fulminating a string of oaths in the very purest Connaught, dealt a blow on the breast of the cellarman that sent him prostrate on three dozen of choice brandy—picked samples for the dowager Lady Drinkwater—to their utter destruction, and to the exceeding surprise of the wine merchant, who had never in all his life heard an Italian count vituperate such beautiful, such unadulterate Irish. I will not continue the story: Thaddeus Ballynamuck, though an admirable artist, fell a victim to the exuberance of his feelings; as a swindler he was professionally killed by Angelo, the late Marchesa di Lungabarba's greyhound.

I have narrated this little history that it may serve as an illustration of the perils besetting an honest, simple, guileless Englishman who might wish to swindle as an exotic. There is, it must be allowed, unnecessary peril in the experiment; besides I question if it be not unpatriotic. Why defraud our mother country of the advantage of our reputation? Why, with ungrateful, with unfilial hand add a leaf to the laurel of Germany—of France—of Italy—of Russia? No; for a true born Briton to swindle as a noble from the Hartz mountains—as a count from Paris—a Roman count—or a prince from St Petersburg—is poor, shuffling, shabby, or, if I may use a term which I am proud to find of late very current among politicians and political writers (for the classes are more distinct than people are prone to imagine)—it is *Un-English*.

America, however, has her claims upon us. The swindler may, and with profit, prove his recollection of the ties that

once bound Columbia to Britain—may gratefully acknowledge a sense of the relationship between the mother and the daughter country, by swindling as a gentleman with enormous possessions in New York, or, what is still better, in Virginia. Here the many-sided philosopher cannot fail to recognise a new advantage in a community of language. The *soi-disant* (hem! French again!), the *soi-disant* American swindler may avenge the injuries of a greyhound on the person of a cellarman, yet run no risk of discovery. He may still run up and down the gamut of execration and not betray himself. Think of this, youthful swindler. Besides, there is another great temptation to offer this passing honour to America. Her unsettled currency affords the swindler a hundred plausible excuses if—for such improprieties do occur at the London Hotel, Grillon's, the Clarendon, all the very best of houses—if rudely pressed to show those credentials of gentility which even the rudest and the most illiterate never fail to acknowledge. Thus the swindler may for a time throw himself upon the banks: and this the more safely if he have displayed a handful of letters of introduction (a few to the royal household), all easily manufactured, and all, for the time, as good as letters of credit. There is another very practicable deceit. He may, on the night of his arrival in London, have his pocket picked of certain Government securities, and, having made the keeper of the hotel the depository of his secret, straightway advertise the loss in all the papers. This, I confess, is a ticklish experiment, demanding the finest self-possession, the greatest delicacy to carry it into successful operation; and if the youthful swindler have any doubts of himself, I charge him by his hopes of future profit and reputation not to think of hazarding it. Should he, however, succeed, and the landlord advance liberally, he may condescend to express his best wishes for the prosperity of his host, and more, may invite himself to dine with him. Great caution, however,

is to be used before there be any advance to such familiarity; and yet I once knew a gentleman from Natchez who obtained unlimited credit from his host—the pot-house keeper was musical—by insisting upon it that he made Dibdin's "Lovely Nan" by the very force of expression remarkably like Rossini. So far, all was well; but, forgetful of what was due to himself as a swindler,—in the genial atmosphere of a domestic hearth letting himself down to the level of his host—the foolish fellow suffered himself to play at cribbage with his landlord; a man who had spent at least half of his long and useful life, pegging. Game after game the landlord's doubts increased: and at length he rose from the table with a blank in his face, and all the swindler's bill in his heart. "I'm done—I know I'm done!" cried the host with a groan. "I must be done, for no true gentleman could ever beat me at cribbage." At least one month's board and lodging, besides the greatest of all advantages, the first-rate reference to shopkeepers, did my friend from Natchez lose by his skill at cribbage. It is true when hard pressed he talked a great deal about the last failure of the cotton crop—an excellent theme, by the way—but in this case he talked to the winds, or, what was much worse, to a man obstinate upon his bill. My friend had to make an ignominious retreat, leaving behind him all his goods generously subscribed for him by the ingenuous West-end shopkeepers.

Notwithstanding this, the swindler may for a time take America for his country. The trick is by no means overdone. If, however, the swindler make the election—if he resolve upon becoming a gentleman of enormous fortune from the United States—he had better choose the South, and, above all things, he must not forget the cotton crop. As it once happened at New Orleans, much execution may, even in London, be done upon the enemy from behind cotton bags. As for his rank, the swindler should not

venture beyond that of colonel—yes, a colonel and a great grower of cotton.

We next come to a most important subject—the dress of the swindler. The present age judges of the condition of men as we judge of the condition of cats—by the sleekness, the gloss of their coats. Hence, in even what is called a respectable walk of life, with men of shallow pockets and deep principles, it is of the first importance to their success that, if they would obtain three hundred per annum, they must at least look as if they were in receipt of seven. Very many stoical privations are endured for this great purpose. How many a fine hungry fellow carries his dinner upon his back—his breakfast in his beaver—his supper in his boots! The Hottentot is not the only human animal that clothes itself with the cost of bowels. The swindler, however, is not—fate forbid that it should be so!—called upon to make the same sacrifice required every day in London of the poor, friendless student—of the miserable, unknown artist—the juvenile surgeon, panting for a practice—the barrister, without a fee—the curate, with lips hungering for even locusts and wild honey—the thousands of God's most helpless creatures, gentlemen, born with a silver spoon, but left by fortune at their maturity without any employment for knife and fork—no, no, it is the purpose, the triumph of swindling to put its professors in purple and fine linen, and to make "their eyes red with wine and their teeth white with milk." They have to dress well, not to keep up the barren name of gentleman, but to flourish as swindlers. Poor Dactyl, the poet—astonishing truth!—is too proud to take credit for a hat—too poor to buy one—and too high-spirited to nod to his old college friends in a rusty beaver. Will the reader listen to a fact? What does Dactyl? Why, he makes a compromise with his magnanimity — he over-persuades himself that his beaver is as yet tolerably jetty, since all the summer he has once a day sponged it with a damp

sponge, and kept religiously upon the shady side of the pavement. I mention this wretched shift of a pusillanimous spirit to show to the young swindler what might be his fate if, with a pertinacity only found in simpletons of the very first class, he would resolve to live the gentleman upon the revenue of the chameleon; and, with not a sixpence in his pocket, would be sufficiently mad to rave about honour in his bosom. What is the reward of such obstinacy—what the goal of men so honourably idle—so perversely pure? What the end? Go,—ask it of the Thames! Put the question to the Serpentine—the New River—the canals! Mutter the query as you pause at the gunsmith's—as you linger at the chemist's! Ask, as you see whisk by you the chariot of the coroner!

I had not touched upon this mean-spirited class of bipeds—of the species, many of whom die off in honourable poverty, and many in a dishonourable horse-pond—did not swindling save a third portion of the body from a life of starvation and an end of vulgar misery. The good, indulgent parents who, in submission, as they conceive, to the high civilisation of the day, will rather let their sons be nothing if they cannot put them in a fair way to become archbishops, chancellors, and commanders-in-chief, owe much to swindling, for—urbane goddess!—how often does she take the pet of the fireside—the darling of the chimney corner—the pretty prodigal, when plucked of every feather by the jackdaws[1] of the town, and make of him again a bird of finest plumage. Yes, thousands and thousands of young gentlemen, shamefully deserted by their parents when they had not a farthing more to leave them, and—wanting a calling—with nothing to do, have been received with open arms by the tenderest of foster-mothers; and not only once more set upon their legs, but,

[1] I persuade myself that Captain Whitefeather here meant nothing personal.—[JOHN JACKDAW, Ed.]

perhaps, for the first time in their lives, put into their own cabriolets! Little thinks the plodding tradesman, determined upon making Tom a gentleman, that his dear boy may owe all the external appearances of that character to nought but swindling. But I have wandered.

The swindler must dress well—very well; nay, he must be rather over-dressed than under-dressed. If his means be scanty, he must on the outset, if I may use the phrase of a celebrated bill discounter, late of the New Cut—he must "spend his money superficially"; that is, as the before-named fiscal authority condescended to explain, he must expend a little in such a way that the outlay may appear very considerable. He must, however, continually bear this in mind, that in this our beloved country—in England—the empress of nations—the queen of reason—the genius of toleration—and the benefactress of the oppressed—nearly everything depends upon a man's coat. Great and rich is he indeed who can afford to confront the midday sun in threadbare cloth. It matters not what may be your genius—what your worth; you must make the success of that genius apparent—you must publish the reward of that worth; you must assure men's eyes that you are a fine gentleman, or you will, with all your glorious aspiration, be passed, confounded with the mob. The triumphs of mind are to the trading million too subtle, too abstract, to be easily grasped; but the quality of a man's coat—the gorgeousness of his vest—the chain of finest carat—the ring of brightest sparkle—all of these are so many indisputable evidences of worldly success, and are, therefore, to be continually carried about by a man as universal vouchers for his character. John Bull has certainly the largest eyes of any of the nations. Hence, if it be imperative upon men with even a known calling to exhibit an outward sign of the prosperity of that craft, how much more is it incumbent on us—the minions of Mercury, with nothing but the vivacity

of our wits "to feed and clothe" us—to put a splendid outside upon swindling, and since the world ducks to appearance, to assure ourselves of its very, very lowest stooping! I have never yet known an instance of a successful swindler in a shabby coat. Who, indeed, would trust a man with a hole in his hat? Read the Police Reports—those "short and simple annals"—how, nineteen times out of twenty, do they commence? Why, thus—"Algernon Mountedgecomb, a young man dressed in the highest style of fashion," etc., etc. Such is always the strain; for can the reader point out any case with any verbal similarity to the following:—"Yesterday, John Snooks, a wretchedly attired fellow, was brought up charged with obtaining under false pretences a diamond ring, a gold repeater, and a suit of pearls from the house of——?" Has ever such a case been chronicled? Certainly not: hence, the tailor is indispensable to the swindler, who is on no account to spare him. The swindler may, in the weakness of his nature, have some qualms towards any one except a tailor; but the swindler who deals mercifully with a tailor had better seek another profession—such chicken-heartedness is not for our art. The benevolence is so much goodness lost—wasted—flung to the winds; for you are to bear with you this recollection: it is an axiom in his trade, that the tailor never loses. "Them as does pay"—such was the confession of an eminent coatmaker after his second bottle of Burgundy drank at Button Park, his country seat—"them as does pay," said the good man, "pays for them as doesn't." Can there be a finer provision for the protection of trade, and the satisfaction of the non-paying? Hence, if possible, flay your tailor. Should he discount—for there are such philanthropists—let him have a few bills by all means. In his vast profits what are two or three thousands more or less in a twelvemonth's balance? *If*, however, he will not discount the paper of your friends —"accommodate" is a good word—he cannot refuse your

own bill. Great is the satisfaction of a bill! What serenity comes upon a man's soul when he hath writ "accepted"! What a load he feels lifted from his lightened heart! How airily, how joyously he looks around him, elevated with a sense of duty done to his neighbour and to himself! Sweet, most sweet, the satisfaction! Such I am sure was the feeling of my late lamented friend, Captain Judas Gammon; for that excellent fellow never accepted a bill that he did not clasp his hands and, raising his eyes with a devout look of thanksgiving, exclaim, "There now—thank heaven—! that's paid!"

There is, however, one objection to a bill—it puts another pair of wings to the back of Time. Hence, get a long day. He was a philosopher and knew human nature, and more than all, those profound workings of the human heart set going by the machinery of bills,—he *was* a sage who, at the Old Bailey bar,—what men of wit and genius have made that nook all classic ground!—having received sentence of seven years' retirement from the bustling world, thus, with smiling face, addressed the judge:—"I beg your pardon, my lord, but have you a stamp about you? if so, permit me to accept a bill at seven years, for then they'll pass like one."

Next for equipage. A swindler, like a physician, can scarcely hope to prosper on foot. He must *ride* to fame and fortune: hence a cab is of the first consequence to him. This, however, is too obvious to call for further disquisition. The effect of a magnificent cab—a grey blood—and a diminutive fancy tiger—upon the sensibilities of the shopkeeping world are every day made manifest by the Police Reports. Jonathan Wild, Richard Turpin, and other worthies laboured on horseback—civilisation adds to their less bloodthirsty descendants the comforts and the graces of a cab.

And now, come we to the moral bearing of the swindler.

"Obee worbver laboured on horseback.

Destiny has marked him to play a very various character. He is, I will not attempt to disguise it, beset by difficulties. There are men, assuredly, born with a genius for the profession; who, as it would seem, instinctively adapt themselves to all its peculiarities; men who would have been lost, sacrificed, utterly unknown in any other calling. I do not address myself to them—this luminous work is not written for their instruction; but to the thousands of the rising generation, induced, tempted, by the spirit of the times—a spirit of the most tyrannic gentility—to live without means; to eat the fat of the land without once greasing their delicate fingers in search of it. Let these, however, not conclude that our path lies over flowers: by no means; there are very many rubs to be endured on the way—rubs calling for at once the greatest self-possession and the most admired meekness. Indeed, I should not discharge a great public duty did I not state it as my conviction that very far less powers of mind, and ingenuity of a much

lower scale, are found sufficient to make a fortune in any of the low mechanic arts of life than are required by even the humblest swindler. However, the ardour of youth is not to be withstood; hence our best choice is to instruct and fortify it.

And now, neophyte swindler, let me put a few questions to you. And ere you answer, submit to a most rigorous self-examination—search every hole and corner of your heart; and then hold up your head and reply unblushingly.

Can you bear what is called public contempt? Are you clothed with a moral armour, more impenetrable than the scales of the dragon—from which the glances of reproach, the scoffs, the sneers, the hard abuse of vulgar minds—the mere pity of those prigs who call themselves philanthropists—shall fall aside unfelt and unremembered?

Can you school yourself to look in all human faces—for this trial *will* come—and find them blank?

Have you sufficient fortitude to witness unrepiningly the good fortune of some early companion—a dullard, yet plodding, and what the world calls honest—surrounded with all the luxuries of life, the fruits of lowly huckstering, when, possibly, you yourself are yearning for a tester?

Can you bear with the nerves of a martyr the visitation of a horse-whip—for I will not shirk any of the probabilities that wait upon the profession—or the vindictive and un-Christianlike application of a pointed boot to the *os sacrum*? [1]

Can you, at proper time and season, bear your nose pulled?

[1] "It is very strange," remarks Captain Whitefeather in one of his unpublished essays, "On Personal Satisfaction," "how very few men know what is due to themselves and to the second party, in inflicting what they call personal chastisement. I have," continues the Captain, with that delightful ingenuousness which made him the soul of his circle, "I have been kicked, horse-whipped, cudgelled, tossed in a blanket, pumped upon and flung into a horse-pond, yet I never, but in one instance, met with a man who thrashed me *like a gentleman*."—[JOHN JACKDAW, Ed.]

I am aware that this is perhaps the most difficult, the most trying ordeal for the weakness of human nature to withstand; and therefore, I repeat the question—Can you bear your nose pulled?

Can you, with no qualms at your throat, behold in rags or in a gaol the simple gull who has trusted you, or who—more exquisitely simple still—has become your surety?

Can you, when old age approaches, and your place in the world is filled up by more active, more youthful professors—can you, with your hand upon your heart, retire like a philosopher to a corner, and with not an eye to look comfort to you, not a lip to breathe hope to you, not a hand to grasp your hand—can you breathe your last breath with the conviction that you have done no injury to the dead, will leave no wounds in the living—and that having passed a life in heroic defiance of human prejudices, you meet death with the magnanimous indifference of a roasted Indian?

Consider, my dear pupil, whether you are so happily organised that you can support these trials—too often attendant on our chivalrous profession—and answer.

The pupil laughs at the impossibility of such evils, and, chuckling at the fun, says—I can.

And Swindling takes him to her arms and makes him all her own!

CHAPTER V

A Brief Summary of the Advantages of Swindling

I have, I hope, made it sufficiently plain to the plainest understanding that the faculty, the desire to swindle, is born with us, and that it is entirely owing to the force of circumstance whether we swindle or not; and that, however nice, and moral, and exemplary, we may be in our individual capacity, swindle we must and do, when we congregate together, even

with what are termed and considered the very best intentions. This being granted, let every man with all possible speed enroll himself as one of a body corporate. He may be a most rigid member of a Temperance Society, considering the parish pump the only source of all human enjoyment; and yet, as one of a body, he may drive a very pretty trade in opium. He may, to his great self-exaltation, hold a plate in aid of the funds for the dissemination of the true faith; and yet the diamond on his finger may have been purchased with an odd balance of the profits which, as one of a company, he receives from a Hindoo idol. What the superficial world denominates and brands as swindling in the individual it applauds as spirited speculation, wisdom, foresight, a fine knowledge of business in a number. Hence, if a man would swindle safely, steadily, and above all, respectably, let him become one of a public company, and his dearest wish is straight fulfilled. What a profound liar he may be on the Stock Exchange, and yet what an oracle of truth at his own fireside! How he is permitted to rob his neighbour by means of false intelligence, and what a roaring he is justified in setting up should some famishing, unprincipled scoundrel lessen by one the numerous tenants of the good man's hen-roost! Reader, if you are not already enrolled, become one of a body. Though you may be only able to edge yourself into a vestry, it shall be something. And what a relief it is for the individual man, compelled to walk half his time through the world in tight moral lacing, to be allowed to sit at his ease at the Board! If morality sigh for leisure, where can it be enjoyed if not in a company! Once in a company, how many Catos become Antonys!

To the rising generation the advantages of swindling are incalculable. The term swindling is, at present, an ugly one; but with the advancement of the world it will be considered as another and a better system of ethics. To obtain all things

needful for the refined man, by the exercise of the moral faculties, is, doubtless, the greatest triumph of human intellect, and this is inevitably achieved by the successful practice of swindling.

There is another advantage—another consolation—that I have purposely left for consideration in this place.

When the plodding, sober, thrifty man quits this noisy world—made noisy by the incessant rattling of pounds, shillings, and pence—it is ten to one that he makes what is generally called an irreparable gap in a large circle of the most affectionate of friends. He leaves a widow broken-hearted — daughters inconsolable — sons in the deepest affliction—nieces and nephews very much concerned — and innumerable acquaintances all ready, with very little further excitement, to burst into tears. Now here is a woe inflicted upon fifty people by the decease of one man —yes, here are fifty people made more or less miserable by a very natural event, the decease of a worthy soul, who would not willingly inflict a moment's pain upon any living thing.

How different the death of the swindler! He makes no irreparable gap in society—not he! he agonises neither man, nor woman, nor child; not a tear is dropped at his grave—not a sigh rises at the earth rattling on his coffin! Must not the conviction of this be the sweetest consolation to the dying swindler? Think of his end, and——

. . . . . .

[It may be thought that the work ends abruptly. It does so: the author had not leisure to finish it. The following letter will, perhaps, throw some light upon the matter. It was addressed by the Captain to an intimate friend:—

"H.M. Transport, *Barrington*.

"Dear Tom,—We are off for blue water. Some papers of mine are in a deal box in the two-pair back of the Bag-o-Nails. If you

love me, see I'm in print. I learn from a fellow-shipmate—whose only misfortune is that his handwriting was very similar to another gentleman's—that the papers will make a very pretty book, there being a great call nowadays for the greatest information in the smallest compass. You can pay in for me what you get through the Home Office. Be wide awake, and believe me, under all convictions,

"Yours truly,

"Barabbas Whitefeather.

"P.S.—You know I never liked shaving; the chin's bad enough—but when it comes to the head, it's 'regular cruelty to animals.'"

The above is ("errors excepted") a true copy of the Captain's letter. He died in—I regret to say I cannot give the exact latitude: suffice it to say he died; but left behind him what, I trust, will prove an imperishable monument of his social worth and his exalted genius.—John Jackdaw, Ed.]

THE EDITOR'S CHAPTER TO THE READER

The reader has, probably, marked a variety of style in the foregoing pages. The Editor feels it to be due as much to the lamented Captain Whitefeather as to himself to state that he, John Jackdaw, is solely responsible for the manner in which this work is presented to all the eyes of the British public.

Nature had been very prodigal to the Captain; but whether from the extreme vivacity of his genius, or whether from a more hidden cause, it is vain to search, the Captain, with all his debts, owed nothing to art. Even his orthography was of the happiest originality.

The Editor, therefore, felt the peculiar delicacy of his task. Had he printed the MS. as it came, with the bloom upon it, from the Captain's hand, it was to be feared that in

this age of light reading—which reading, like pills, is made to be bolted, not, like bread, to be carefully chewed—not one out of a hundred would have had the necessary patience to go through with it. To suppress the work for any defect of style would have been to sacrifice, as the Editor considered, a great national good. After much deliberation there appeared to him a golden mean. It struck the Editor that he might, in very many instances, give the style of Whitefeather, whilst in very many more he might heighten, and adorn, and vary it from his own poor resources. Still, be it understood, all the *facts* are Whitefeather's; the Editor only lays claim to certain tropes, and metaphors, and inimitable felicities of expression, to which, probably, it might be considered indelicate were he more emphatically to allude. Indeed, he has only touched upon the theme in the way of business; as there may be, even at this moment, many noble and distinguished authors who, "wanting the accomplishment" of grammar, are yet desirous of appearing in print. (To these, in parenthesis, the author addresses himself; assuring the tadpole *literati* that he finishes tales, histories, biographies, poems, etc., with all despatch, and with the most inviolable secrecy. His address is in a former page, and Breakneck Steps is too well known to all who would mount Parnassus.)

To the publishers of the remains of Captain Whitefeather the Editor has to express his warmest gratitude. The Editor blushes for the intelligence of the trade, when he states that this national work, like the hitherto inimitable *Robinson Crusoe*, was offered in the humblest manner to twenty houses, and, sometimes coldly, sometimes sulkily, sometimes indignantly refused.

One was tickled by the title, but looked blank when he understood that there was no murderer—no highwayman in it. He declared that the only way to keep a reader awake was to commit at least one murder in every page; that the

gallows was now the only bay tree, and that even the youthful generation sucked intelligence and morals from tales of the gibbet, with the same eagerness and the same advantage that they sucked liquorice root! "Season it, sir—season it," said one bland gentleman, "with a handful of murders—a terrific storm on the New River—and a miraculous escape from Marylebone watchhouse, and there may be some hopes of it." A second asked me to change the title into "The Handbook of the Money Markets," adding, to my astonishment, that he had no doubt the staple of the matter would serve equally well. A third but why should I enumerate the rebuffs endured? No; let me rather, in the name of an obliged generation, register a gratitude to the enlightened spirit under whose auspices the book appears—a work destined, as the Editor with all diffidence declares, to work a good as incalculable as, perhaps, unknown!

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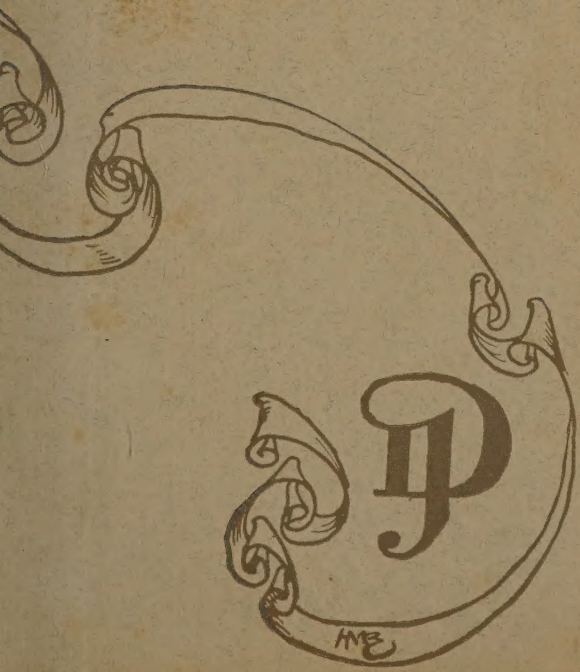

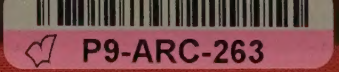
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